SIX SERMONS,

PREACHED BY THE LATE

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Epitaph of the deceaſed author, to be ſeen in the Lutheran Church yard of this City.

" I ſtood amidſt a crowd, prepar'd for different vineyard-ſtages:
" But lo! to me the owner came, and ſaid receive thy wages.

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PREFACE.

THOUGH the demand may generally be reaſonable, that nothing ſhould appear in print but what by its intrinſic excellency could claim the right of perpetuity and attract the attention of thoſe, who never wiſh to read without an expectation to learn; yet as particular affection will often ſtamp a high price on things of ſmall value, ſo this may ſometimes be the caſe with printed publications.

The author of the following Sermons, who really compoſed and delivered them in ſome of the Lutheran churches of this and New-Jerſey State, had too much judgment and modeſty, to intend them for the preſs: yet that his parents now preſent the public with them, ſince to their unſpeakable grief this excellent and godly youth is beyond the reach of praiſe or reprehenſion, who but a character of an evil eye and of an unfeeling heart would ſcorn the appearance of meditations, which are intended to be both monuments of early piety and inſtruments of wiping away a parental tear?

The author of theſe Sermons, whoſe parents are not in a line which naturally would lead them to give their children a liberal education, was ſent to a grammar-ſchool and afterwards to Columbia-College at his own unrelenting and irreſiſtible requeſt: a requeſt, which ſeemed myſterious and unaccountable. His uniform and unchangeable declaration from his infancy was, that he wiſhed to become a miniſter of the goſpel. That an early inclination of this kind often bears

a doubtful aſpect is well known. The talents of a popular preacher are often extolled in the hearing of an ambitious child; but a nearer inſpection of the condition and circumſtances of the clerical order ſoon arreſts the progreſs of ſuch a deſire, particularly in this country, and leads to a choice, where ſelf-love finds its more permanent intereſt. But Mr. Van Buſkirk was never tempted with a moment of irreſolution on this head. A contradiction ſtriking at this his favorite plan, alone gave him pain, from whatever quarter it came: in every thing elſe, I freely confeſs I have never ſeen a youth, who could bear contradiction better. He had beſides, particular difficulties to cope with. His parents are members of a congregation, where a language is uſed, of which young people, born in this country, can only become maſters by indefatigable application, for which application, however, means are provided, of which ſuch, as honor their parents, avail themſelves with tolerable ſucceſs. But Mr. Van Buſkirk's parents not being of German, but of low Dutch extraction, had never been uſed to make the German language the vehicle of their domeſtic converſation, and my young friend, therefore, was ſent to Engliſh ſchools alone. But filial affection made him often join his parents in their public worſhip, though a continuance in that communion with reſpect to him was at firſt not intended. When he entered the junior claſs of Columbia College, he began to ſtudy the Hebrew language with me, with a view to continue his theological ſtudies, after having finiſhed the academical courſe, with an epiſcopalian clergyman. I approved of his intention and never hinted to him a wiſh, that he might change his reſolution, though from that time he became a conſtant hearer among us.

There is not a great difference in point of doctrine in all the proteſtant churches. True piety twiſts the tie of brotherly love, commanded as the royal law by our common maſter, not congregational union. With

the church of England, however, the Lutherans have and ever had a closer connection, than with others, owing to a more perfect similarity in church-government, festival days, ceremonies, and even some particulars in doctrine. The episcopalian church, indeed, does not call itself after Luther's name: but even the church, called the Lutheran, has not that name by legal and public sanctions. In public acts it is called the evangelical church. Henry VIII. who began the reformation in England, had previously himself written a book against Luther, and was not able, after having changed his religious opinions, entirely to eradicate a deeply rooted animosity against an old antagonist, who in answering his book had only made use of the then common controversial stile. But the reformed church of England was afterwards under Edward VI, and Queen Elizabeth so modeled and modified, that it bore the nearest relation to the church established in Sweden, Denmark, Saxony, Prussia, Hanover, Wurtemberg, &c. The Lutherans have bishops, superintendents, seniors and inspectors. The thirty nine articles fully agree with the Augustan confession and every Lutheran can subscribe them. The two German chaplains at St. James's use a German translation of the English liturgy. The king of Great-Britain, as a Lutheran, is the head of the church of Hanover, and one of his princes on this account is entitled to the bishopric of Osnabrug. At the accession of George the I. the agreement of both churches was, by a conference of English and German divines investigated into and pronounced to be as perfect as possible, which removed the doubts of this king, who is said to have declared, that he would not renounce his religion for a crown. The bishops of London, therefore, have never made a difficulty to ordain Lutheran divines, when called to congregations, which on account of being connected with English episcopalians, made this ordination requisite. Thus by bishops of London the following Lutheran ministers were ordained: Bryselius, Pet. Muhlenberg, Illing, Hausеal,

and Wagner. The laſt mentioned was called after having obtained this ordination, to an Evangelical Lutheran congregation in the Margraviate of Anſpach in Germany. For reaſons obvious to ſome of the readers of theſe ſheets, I have only to add, that I have theſe twenty four years, that is, as long as I have inſtructed ſtudents of divinity for my church, uniformly and conſtantly held out this and no other language to them, and that it was in conſequence of this ſubſiſting union, that the evangelical Lutheran conſiſtory, held at Rhinebeck on the firſt of September, 1797, entered the following reſolution:

"That on account of an intimate connection ſubſiſting between the Engliſh Epiſcopalian and the Lutheran churches; and the identity of their doctrine and near alliance of their church diſcipline, this conſiſtory will never acknowledge a new erected Lutheran church, merely Engliſh, in places, where the members may partake of the ſervice of the ſaid Engliſh epiſcopal church."

To return to my deceaſed young friend, he, actuated by a degree of filial reverence to his parents, which in my opinion can hardly be exceeded, joined at laſt conſtantly their place of worſhip, and having there received impreſſions, diſcoverable by a devotion and attention, which will never be forgotten by thoſe who obſerved him, came to a firm reſolution to ſerve his Lord and Maſter, in that communion where he ſo powerfully had manifeſted himſelf to him. He from this time ſtudied with great application the German language, became a communicant of the church, and at the ſame time the pattern of all the young people in the congregation, and the joy and tacit admiration of his parents and numerous relations. His conduct was as exemplary and pleaſing in attending his lectures in College, where he never grieved any of his teachers, in converſation with his fellow ſtudents and in his deportment in common life, as in the church. With tears glittering in his

eyes, which it would be impoſſible for my heart ever to forget, he begged of me but a month before his death, to continue my inſtructions, and not to think him capable of future ingratitude. An event, with which he was entirely unconnected, had nearly fixed in my mind a reſolution, to diſcontinue all endeavours and labours with ſtudents of divinity. A few only render my reflection on paſt labour agreeable. I had repeated my advice, therefore, to chooſe a teacher who would not require two languages; but I ſoon found reaſon to repent of this hint. Seeing, nay feeling ſuch a ſerioufneſs in his reſolution, I repeated my promiſes to continue my inſtructions with pleaſure.

Alas! I ſoon found his declaration was not only the effuſion of piety, but it appeared to be of a prophetical nature. He is now among the ſpirits, made perfect, and more capable of appreciating the religious knowledge, he ſo eagerly imbibed, than he would have been, had his conſtant wiſh been literally granted to him, to be a miniſter of the goſpel on earth. Some ſuch precious ſouls our Lord delights to have them tranſlated to his preſence at an early ſtage of life, for reaſons which a glorious eternity will develope. They ſerve him at the altar not made with hands.

His laſt hours were edifying to the higheſt degree. During his ſickneſs, which laſted only a week, and was of a plethoric kind, he appeared to me to reſemble the ſuffering lamb of God—never complaining, and with a tender look beholding his friends. At receiving the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, after the uſual preparation, he ſaid, "I feel deeply humbled." With tottering lips and a forced ſound, he deſired from his mother yet the favour to exhort ſome perſons to unanimity and brotherly love. From the firſt moment of his ſickneſs, he expected ſoon to be with the Lord, and he ſoon attained his aim.

My dear departed friend, my crown and my joy on the great day, whom to have inſtructed, is now my moſt pleaſing and favorite reflection, when ſuch a remembrance in reſpect to ſome others muſt create me pain—*thou haſt had but little labour, and haſt gotten unto thee much reſt.* Thou workedſt thy work betimes, and it reſted with the Lord, whom thou conſtantly lovedſt, at what time he would give thee thy reward.

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NEW YORK, NOV. the 10th, 1797.

SIX SERMONS.

SERMON I.

On Eph. v. 15, 16.

See, then, that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise.
Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

IT is a circumstance truly affecting when we consider the natural state of man: for it brings into recollection the sinful and corrupted state we are in by birth, and the evil propensities we are daily disposed to pursue. It is of the utmost importance to know what we are by nature, that we may discover the impropriety of our conduct, and the innumerable consequences resulting therefrom. For it is well known from observation and experience that man is inclined to do evil, and delights infinitely more to be

engaged in the pleaſures and purſuits of the world, than in thoſe which are of a ſpiritual and divine nature.

The Apoſtle expreſly affirms that ſuch a natural man walketh according to the courſe of this world, having his converſation in the luſts of the fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the mind. This points out what the courſe and conduct of man is, in a natural and unregenerate ſtate; and to this ſource we may attribute numberleſs dangers and calamities. For in a ſtate of nature man is dead in treſpaſſes and ſin, of conſequence an alien to the love and friendſhip of God. Remaining then in this condition he muſt expect to be deprived of that everlaſting life and glory, which are reſerved for thoſe that fear God, and obey his bleſſed will. But would we wiſh to be extricated from the unfruitful works of darkneſs which attend the natural man, and be in the favor and protection of the Supreme Being; would we alſo guard againſt the ſurrounding evils with which the world is replete, and direct our attention to more important objects than this life affords, we fully ſtand in need of and ſhould follow the admonition in the text: See then that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools but as wiſe, redeeming the time

becauſe the days are evil. Theſe words evidently ſhew the means how to avoid the ways and actions of the children of diſobedience, and conſequently the neceſſity of a moral life. It ſhall therefore be my intention in this evening's diſcourſe, to draw your attention, to the duties, of a moral life

I. Of a moral life itſelf.
II. The neceſſity. of it.

I. What the words in our text moſt obviouſly ſuggeſt, and which duties are particularly required in a moral life, are firſt expreſſed by "walk circumſpectly." In the idea of circumſpect walking we may eaſily diſcover that particular care and attention is required in order to avoid the evils of the world, and to act the part of a true Chriſtian. For if we know that God has given to man directions for the regulation of his conduct which are contrary to the general inclination of man, it is neceſſary to walk with the utmoſt care, or rather with *accuracy*, in order to counteract our own evil propenſities, and the temptations of the world.

1. In this part of the Apoſtles admonition: ſee then that ye walk circumſpectly, are two things indiſpenſibly neceſſary before it can

be ſaid that this part of the injunction is fulfilled. Theſe are not offending our God and our neighbour. In reflecting that we are continually receiving bleſſings from God, and this when we are leaſt deſerving of them, it is our duty to endeavor not to offend him on any occaſion. Not to incur the diſpleaſure of the Supreme Being is the firſt care of a truly circumſpect man, and to obey his will and commandments is his conſtant aim. We are to be engaged in every duty which are not only compriſed in the expreſs commandments but which may be even pleaſing in his ſight. Make you perfect, ſays the Apoſtle in every good work to do his will, doing that which is well pleaſing in his ſight. It is not ſufficient that we have our minds fixed alone upon the performance of poſitive injunctions, but we muſt be filled with gratitude and affection, ſo as to ſtimulate us to purſue, inveſtigate, and prove what is not only the perfect, but alſo the good and acceptable will of God. Even to do thoſe things, which, if I may uſe the expreſſion, reſt upon probability; that is, our willingneſs and readineſs muſt extend ſo far, as to avoid things, which poſſibly might be offenſive to him.

2. The ſecond part of this performance, as it reſpects our neighbour, is contained in either of the three ſubſequent relations---as it concerns his property, perſon, reputation, or whatever elſe may in any way affect him. It is our duty, and trueſt intereſt to aſſiſt our fellow men, at all times poſſible, in the preſervation of their lives and poſſeſſions, and to guard againſt the wrongs and violence which may beoffered by mankind. Were we to offer ſuch injuries, or permit others to offer them, we ſhould violate the poſitive commandments of God, "Thou ſhalt not kill, thou ſhalt not ſteal." This is what may reſpect our neighbours externally. But let us attend more cloſely to the latter, which is particularly contained in the idea of offending man, which is his reputation. Every member belonging to human ſociety is entitled to a degree of eſteem among his fellow creatures, and even in order to avoid unneceſſary provocations, we ought to extend ſuch eſteem above the merits of individuals, or their ſituation in life. We ſhould be cautious, as Chriſtians, to leſſen the reputation of our neighbours; for there is nothing, generally ſpeaking, more difficult to acquire, and more valuable to its poſſeſſor.

It is preferable to all other worldly acquisitions, and in the language of Solomon, 'Rather to be chosen than great riches;' an acquisition so alluring to men as to be their chief object. Upon the credit which we justly merit among men depends the prosperity, comforts, and all the accommodations of life, even life itself. It may be enquired by some, since such caution is to be used in order to preserve our reputation, what may be the evil practices by which it may be abused? A man's reputation may be impaired by false reports, declaring things which arise from envy, or pretended injuries received. By censoriousness, which is the source of all calumny, as detraction, slander, evil speaking, rash judgment, drawing conclusions from improper premises, and others equally detestable to a religious breast. Suffice it to say, that whatever they may be, and in whatever degree they are practised, they are notwithstanding inconsistent with the profession of a Christian. They are in direct opposition to that great commandment of our blessed Saviour, which contains the sum of our duty to man, "Love thy neighbour as thyself. To avoid then falling into extremes in our conduct, we must conform ourselves

ſtrictly to the law of charity. Severe cenſures, unjuſt ſuſpicions, unguarded hypotheſes, forming the worſt conſtruction upon the words and actions of our neighbour, and propenſities of a ſimilar nature muſt be eradicated from the mind. For the Apoſtle affirms that "Charity thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things." When the charity of any perſon is called in queſtion it is our indiſpenſable duty to be inclined to fancy the beſt, to judge and ſpeak of their actions in the moſt favourable manner: Acting otherwiſe is rejecting the admonition of our Saviour, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is deſtroying the gracious intention of the goſpel, which is to create and eſtabliſh love to God, concord and unanimity among mankind.

3. What the Apoſtle farther conſiders as neceſſary to a moral life is *walking wiſely*. Not as fools but as wiſe. Here you obſerve are two characters, and theſe widely different in their nature and conduct. The fooliſh, or unwiſe, we may define to be men, who ſeem to have drowned the powers of their reaſon, and conſequently who do not in any of their tranſactions, govern their paſſions. This coincides with the deſcrip-

tion given in words ſubſequent to that of the text, Wherefore be not unwiſe, but underſtanding what the will of the Lord is. That they, by being ſubject to the rage of paſſion, do in reality deſpiſe God, the Apoſtle evidently ſhews: for they are called 'the children of diſobedience'; they are ſuch 'whoſe actions and words in ſecret are ſhameful, who are engaged in all things that are to be reproved and made manifeſt.'

Now the reverſe of all this, is the character of the wiſe. Inſtead of being deſtitute of the uſe and influence of his reaſon, he fully enjoys it; which leads him to diſcover his way, and order all his affairs with diſcretion. He foreſees what will be the courſe of human conduct, and therefore avoids numberleſs dangers and calamities. A wiſe perſon is not only favored with that knowledge, which enables him to perceive what is and is not to be done, according to circumſtance, time and place, but alſo what may tend to the beſt end. When the words and converſation of a fooliſh perſon are unbecoming and vain, thoſe of the wiſe are profitable, and ſpiritually directed, for they have 'no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but are filled with the ſpirit.' They have that wiſdom from above

which St. James calls pure, peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be intreated, full of mercy and good works, without partiality and without hypocriſy. This is the character of the wiſe. Let us then as chriſtians endeavor to merit the character, and walk wiſely, as children of the light.

It muſt appear evident that a moral life not only requires circumſpection and wiſdom in our conduct, but equally enjoins us to pay a due reſpect to time, *Redeeming the time*, ſays the inſpired writer. Now redeeming here carries the idea of purchaſing. Things which we purchaſe, we eſteem, and what we give for them we value leſs. But can this be effected in regard to time? Moſt certainly it can. Let us value time as the moſt precious thing. Let us ſacrifice many pleaſures to gain time. Let us embrace and improve every opportunity and means of directing it to the beſt advantage poſſible. It is to be taken as a Metaphor from the merchants, who frequently part with their pleaſure for gain: and ſo ſhould we deny our own eaſe and pleaſure in order to gain ſeaſons of improving the time and doing good. Motives equally forcible to the performance of this duty lay in the conſideration of its brevity. For time in whatever ſenſe it may

be viewed is of ſuch importance, as cannot too often employ our moſt ſerious meditation. Were men more frequently to reflect on the nature of time, with what progreſſion it advances, and when paſt with what ſwiftneſs it flies, they would become ſenſible of its ſhort duration, and prompted with the greateſt zeal and ardor to redeem it.

Time is again to be conſidered as the moſt valuable thing in life; but it appears from the conduct of men, that it is conſidered in a light, which is quite the reverſe of it. For the generality throw it away with thoughtleſs profuſion, either in vicious or unprofitable purpoſes. Yet ſhould we collect the numberleſs *ſmall* portions which we have thus waſted in one, and conſider it as a part of the time which is alloted for our continuance in this life, we ſhould diſcover its value, and the propriety of improving the preſent moment. We ſhould then only be actuated with a firm reſolution of being engaged for the future in ſervices of more importance. Again, to Redeem time, it is requiſite we ſhould know that for the time loſt we are reſponſible. For we were favored by the Supreme Being with the various faculties of both ſoul and body, not to let them remain dormant and uncultivated; but

that we ſhould employ them to ſome uſeful and laudable purpoſes.

II. Having thus unfolded the words of the Apoſtles exhortation I ſhall now proceed to ſhew the *Neceſſity* of ſuch a conduct. This is derived from, and founded upon the reaſon here given, 'becauſe the days are evil.'

It cannot be ſuppoſed that this aſſertion of the Apoſtle aroſe from a conviction that theſe days were evil in reality, that is to ſay, intended to be ſo by the Almighty; but that they merit this appellation from certain external circumſtances. For let us recollect that at the creation all things were pronounced "very good." And as we find that man in particular in God's plan was formed after his own image, we may from this conclude that every part of the creation was intended by their author to be directed and appropriated to every laudable performance.

Now our ſimilarity with God does not conſiſt in the outward form, but ſolely in the nature of the ſoul. This is endowed with two faculties, underſtanding and will, which we cannot by any means ſuppoſe were implanted in us for no purpoſe, or with the intention to be engaged in oppoſition to the divine will.

Conſidering the circumſtances in this light, we cannot diſcover the days to be, and in a ſtrict ſenſe denominate them, evil. But let us view them in an oppoſite repreſentation and we ſhall then ſee why the Apoſtle gives them this epithet.

The days may be pronounced evil when we conſider, and view the general conduct of the world, and behold what perſecution and temptation the followers of Chriſt every where and continually endure. How they are objects of malice, falſe accuſations, reproach, contempt and all of ſuch like ſcenes of ungodlineſs. The days are evil becauſe of the temptations with which thoſe who fear and ſerve God are daily ſurrounded. The devil and his concomitants are ever eager to tempt men to ſin by ſetting before them baits and allurements, all manner of vice painted in the moſt enticing colours,--puffing up the ambitious with expectations of honor, enticing the covetous with hopes of gain, alluring the voluptuous with proſpects of pleaſure, thus endeavoring by every artifice and ſtratagem to draw them off from the ſervices and duties they owe to God, their neighbour and themſelves, and this meerly to ſerve him as the prince of this world.

Some of the chief temptations which compoſe the evil of the day are the principles which are embraced by wicked and ungodly men, who are enemies to the croſs of Chriſt. The aſſertion of the Apoſtle is truly verified in the preſent Age, for in proportion to the knowledge which men have in natural and revealed religion, there has been no age in which more vice, irreligion, and more infidelity has been diſplayed, than in our own.

Do we not daily find men who have more or leſs the principles of deiſm, which if not in their profeſſion, are clearly manifeſt in their conduct. For they are continually endeavoring to undermine the foundations of Chriſtianity by following the light of nature merely, rejecting the holy ſcriptures, ſuppoſing them not genuine, and unneceſſary to their ſalvation, forming a ſyſtem of themſelves from the dictates of conſcience, whether right or wrong, wiſhing to model a ſyſtem which is adapted to their own vicious propenſities, rather than to follow pure revelation, the true ſtandard of uncorrupted reaſon,

Theſe are ſome of the circumſtances which ſtamp the days as evil, and againſt which it is neceſſary we ſhould guard, by

putting in practice the admonition of which our text is compoſed "Walk circumſpectly not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time." And would we avoid the conſequences; it is our indiſpenſible duty, and abſolutely requiſite that we ſhould *walk circumſpectly*, turning, as the proverb expreſſes it, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

How becoming, therefore, to a wiſe man is it to walk wiſely, to be ever on his guard againſt ſuch ſeducers, for ſays the Apoſtle they are "the children of diſobedience, be ye not therefore partakers with them."

The evils which will be attendant on our neglect of this duty will be ſuch as will aſſuredly taint our conduct, and affect our happineſs. They will corrupt our conduct, for if we do not reſiſt theſe evil temptations, if we do not keep our minds from imbibing ſuch deſtructive principles; but permit them to have acceſs in our minds, the depravation will not only be in our principles but communicated and diſcovered in all our ways and practices. But can we ſuppoſe that they will terminate here; charity will not permit us; for if our principles and practice are corrupted it is very natural and reaſonable to conclude that they

will ſo influence our whole conduct as to affect our happineſs both temporal and eternal. In this life it deprives us of the love and gratitude which we owe to God, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and moſt certainly in a future ſtate of exiſtence it will deprive us of the everlaſting rewards reſerved for all thoſe who love and joyfully comply with his bleſſed will.

From theſe conſiderations you may plainly perceive the oppoſition which chriſtians meet with in this life, and the neceſſity of fulfilling the duties which are enjoined in the text in order to merit the chriſtian character.

I ſhall now offer a few obſervations for your further meditation, and improvement. You know my reſpected hearers, for it has no doubt been remarked by you, that the ſcriptures repreſent the chriſtian life, as a life of activity, in which all the powers both corporal and mental are called into action: For this is a ſtate of trial and probation, and therefore many contrarieties to be encountered and duties performed.

As the utmoſt circumſpection and diligence is to be obſerved for the regulation of our conduct, and promotion of our happineſs; it plainly follows that idleneſs and

ſloth are vices the moſt degrading to human nature, and inconſiſtent with our hopes of heaven. They are the ſources of innumerable evils, ſhame, poverty, mental and bodily infirmities and various other calamities are their moſt natural and certain attendants.

Relinquiſh then theſe promoters of vice and deſtroyers of virtue; neglect not to improve the talents committed to your charge; be diligent in accompliſhing the duties which the apoſtle directs you to, for they will aid the great work of your ſalvation. This is the vineyard of your Lord, in which all of you, my beloved, have duties aſſigned. Be not then found idle by the great Maſter of it, neither at the third, the ſixth,, nor the eleventh hour; for remember the more induſtrious you are in advancing the kingdom of God here, the greater will be the reward of your labours hereafter. Further,

As you are to preſeve a moral conduct by guarding on the one hand againſt inactivity and indolence, ſo on the other againſt inconſideration and raſhneſs; for human nature is as liable to fall into one extreme as the other. Let reaſon therefore hold a place in your breaſts and be your chief guide, for

it will ever teach you moderation. It will ever direct you never to proceed to form your judgment of and act againſt another without great caution, without thorough conſideration.

It is for the want of conſideration, that men ſo frequently ſpeak and act to their ſhame and diſgrace; ſo often run into error and vice.

Revolve and examine theſe conſiderations thoroughly in your minds, and you will aſſuredly perceive the propriety of attending to them, and regulating your life accordingingly. Let them ſtir you up to exert yourſelves like men, like chriſtians.

Awake ye that ſleep, and ariſe from the bed of ſloth. Engage in the duties you are called upon to perform. Be watchful be diligent. Be careful in the portion of time which is given you. See that ye diſtribute it with attention and care and improve the opportunities which are continually offered by providence.

Learn my beloved brethren from what has been offered to turn your attention to repentance, and ſincerely engage in the bleſſed work of an early converſion. Delay not this great and neceſſary work of your ſalvation. Think not to defer it to

ſome future period and opportunity, if any there may be; either till the vigour of youth, is exhauſted, or ſickneſs or old age ruſhes upon you, but be perſuaded of the propriety and utility of commencing the practice of it to day. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation."

You know not what the term of your life is, and therefore ignorant of any ſeaſon in which you may be more profitably engaged in this duty than in the preſent. Of futurity, my brethren, you cannot diſpoſe. Time is in the hands of the Almighty, and we muſt be deprived of the enjoyment of it when his wiſdom ſees proper. Let us therefore, not ſuffer the preſent time to be waſted in frivolous enjoyments; but attend to the diſcharge of the religious duties which we owe to God our Creator, and Chriſt our Redeemer. I beſeech you to make yourſelves ſenſible of the ſhortneſs of life, the certainty of your death, and its uncertainty with reſpect of time. Daily examples of mortality occur, which are ſufficient proofs that death is not remote from each of us. We ſhould on this account be circumſpect, and uſe the utmoſt wiſdom in redeeming the time.

We ſee no age exempted from it. The infant in the cradle,---the blooming youth and decrepit old age, all muſt ſubmit to their common enemy, all experience the important event. Allow yourſelves then leiſure to reflect on theſe things, and as you advance in life, ſtudy to improve both in good principles and in good practices. By ſo doing you will enjoy in this life unutterable peace and comfort, and in the life to come be crowned with a bleſſed immortality. Amen.

SERMON II.

On 2 Cor. v. 17.

Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſſed away; behold, all things are become new.

IT is a maxim founded on experience, that men boaſt too much in the poſſeſſion of ſome moral qualities. And it is to be lamented, that, among all denominations of Chriſtians, there are ſuch, who merely by doing ſome generous and moral actions, think to have attained a ſufficient title to the claſs and dignity of the virtuous. Men of this rank, though they are deſtitute of thoſe virtues and internal qualities, which characteriſe a chriſtian; yet in the view of the world, receive the higheſt merit, and are reſpected as religious men.

But if we attend to the general courſe of the world, and examine minutely the moral ſtate of ſuch men in their natural condition, we ſhall find how defective they are in thoſe virtues which they profeſs to cultivate. Though men may not have ſpent their time

in practices of the greateſt immorality---though they may have practiſed many charitable and praiſe-worthy actions---though they may not be guilty of any flagrant breach of honeſty; yet they may be, and in general are, found ignorant of the moſt eſſential duties which fit them for the enjoyment of heaven, viz. the love and fear of God. Theſe divine virtues men in their natural condition do not poſſeſs, for they love and fear men more than their Creator.

From theſe two principles, implanted in the human breaſt by true revealed religion, men are prompted to engage in the ſervice of God with joy and alacrity. Such is not the ſtate of a man's natural character, unchanged by religion, and unſanctified by the ſpirit it breathes.

Notwithſtanding human nature may be ſo puffed up as to eſteem its moral actions ſufficient for the attainment of future felicity, yet the language of experience and ſcripture aſſures us of the contrary. It is therefore neceſſary ſince men in their natural ſtate cannot be pleaſing to their maker; and ſince their moral actions performed therein cannot qualify them for the enjoyment of his kingdom, that they ſhould turn their attention to the true ſource of that vir-

tue, which is pleaſing to God, and coinciding with the dictates of our own conſcience. Men ſhould not only reform themſelves in what is external, but what relates to the internal conſtitution. They muſt be in a more intimate connection with their Redeemer, would they enjoy the benefits of his ſpirit. They muſt live, move, and have their being in him, and according to the declaration of our text, "be in Chriſt;" for by this union alone we are aſſured that we ſhall be 'new creatures,' and conſequently adapted to fulfil the great law of our Creator, to do all things by the great and powerful motive of affection to him.

To this declaration of the apoſtle, which I have ſelected as the ſubject of the following diſcourſe, *that he who is in Chriſt is a new creature, or lives in a new ſtate*, let us at preſent lend a ſerious attention. I ſhall then the illuſtration of it endeavour to ſhew, are what we are to underſtand,

I. By being in Chriſt.

II. A new creature, as the reſult of ſuch living in Chriſt.

To accompliſh the end of the firſt enquiry, I purpoſe to lay before you two means

by which this admirable union with our Lord and Saviour is affected. Theſe are *baptiſm and faith*, and as theſe are, properly ſpeaking, inſeparably connected, let us firſt obſerve how far a union may be attained by the miniſtration of the former.

1. It is through the adminiſtration of baptiſm, that we are initiated into the church of Chriſt, and become members of the ſame. This is the firſt ſtep we muſt take, in order to enjoy the benefit of which it is productive. For being received into the communion of Chriſt's viſible church by baptiſm, we manifeſt our ſubmiſſion to our Saviour's injunctions, and accordingly diſcover the inward inclinations of our heart. An ordinance which is to be preſſed upon, and practiſed by all thoſe who wiſh to enter into covenant with God, and which we are aſſured is to continue unto the end and conſumation of all ages.--- Matth. xxviii. 20.

2. By becoming members of the church through the ordinance of baptiſm, we not only give evident marks of our diſpoſition to obey the laws of God, but as diſciples and true followers of Chriſt actually profeſs our faith, and lay it open to public view.

Thoſe who are profeſſors of the religion of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhew, that they are under no reſtraints in ſerving him with true freedom, and that they have no deſire to conceal their religious ſentiments from the knowledge of others. They feel no ſhame and confuſion in their breaſts when engaged in ſerious contemplation. They are not reluctant to diſcloſe their zeal in improving themſelves in heavenly virtues, and diſcharging their duty to God. The cauſe of all this is evident: for all ſuch actions flow from a principle of ſupreme love, and an eſteem in which the great object ſtands alone without rivals.

3. With entering the church through the baptiſmal font, we connect a ſolemn promiſe of faithfulneſs. We bind ourſelves by this ordinance to fulfill the duties required of us by the chriſtian diſcipline. From the ſolemnity of the promiſe and binding nature, it requires a conſtant diſpoſition to ſeek ſalvation with fear and trembling. For we are to remember that this promiſe conſiſts in following the example of Chriſt, that as he died for us, and roſe again, even ſo it becomes us, who are baptized to die unto ſin, and riſe in righteouſneſs, continually

crucifying our evil and corrupt diſpoſitions, and grow daily in a virtuous and godly life.

2. Another benefit which thoſe enjoy who are baptized in the church, is, that they are partakers of the Holy Ghoſt. St. Paul in the 3d chapter of Titus, and 3d verſe, emphatically expreſſes himſelf thus, "not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his *mercy* he ſaved us, by the *waſhing of regeneration*, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." Here it is ſaid, in mercy he ſaved us, that is to ſay, we are freed from ſin and miſery to which we are expoſed in an heatheniſh and unconverted ſtate, not by any works or deſerts of ours, but by the mere mercy and bounty of God. It is added, by the waſhing of regeneration. This waſhing is attended with the effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt. It is to be obſerved that the conjunction *and* in a ſentence is frequently explanatory of the words preceding it. "And renewing of the Holy Ghoſt," ſays the Apoſtle, intimating that in baptiſm was poured out the Holy Spirit. As an example of this, we find in the third chapter of St. Luke's Goſpel and 16th verſe, where John the baptiſt de-

clares the excellency of Chriſt's office above his own ſaying, "I baptize you with water, but he, namely Chriſt, ſhall baptize with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire:" intimating, that he only as it were cleanſes the ſurface, but Chriſt cleanſes the ſoul by changing man, and by applying the operations of his holy ſpirit, which in their effect are as fire. For as this element has the power when applied to, or put in contact with any other to model it new, to give it a quite different ſurface and nature and as it were refine it; ſo the Spirit of Chriſt has the power of purifying the hearts of mankind from ſin, and conſuming their luſts and corruptions, thereby inſtructing them with virtues which fit them for the enjoyment of Chriſt,

Theſe gifts and graces which thoſe enjoy who are received in the church through the laver of regeneration the Apoſtle in the chapter juſt cited informs us, are ſhed on us abundantly. We do not merely poſſeſs the one or the other parts of the chriſtian equipage, but the armour complete. For being ſurrounded in this vale of tears with numberleſs obſtacles and contending with them, it is requiſite that we ſhould be equiped with all the enſigns of chriſtianity, in order to vanquiſh the world. The

noble increaſe of God's grace is virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs, and charity. All theſe ſhew the abundance of the Holy Spirit afforded us through baptiſm.

Now in conſequence of the Holy Ghoſt being plentifully poured upon and dwelling in us, we are made heirs of eternal life. For the Spirit unites us to Chriſt, and makes us his children, and if children, ſays St. Paul, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt. And by being the adopted ſons, we are entitled to and enjoy the bleſſed and glorious inheritance above.

The other important mean, by which all thoſe, who would deſire to live in the enjoyment of the univerſal Saviour, may attain this end, is *faith* in him, which conſiſts in a joyful, grateful, and confidential reception of Chriſt as Saviour and Lord. The reception of Chriſt by faith evidences a heart full of apprehenſions of the deplorable ſtate of an unconverted and impenitent ſinner, and at the ſame time a willingneſs to be releaſed from ſuch terrors of conſcience. Faith in Chriſt gives real and thorough apprehenſions of the deformity of ſin, and beauty of holineſs, and at length aſſures us of the gracious diſpo-

ſition of the father in heaven, to receive ſuch penitent ſinners through Chriſt, and by enlightening our underſtanding ſhews us the way to happineſs. The Apoſtle in the 5th chap. of Eph. 14, verſe, aſſures us of the happy conſequences of diſengaging ourſelves from the practices of ſin, and endeavoring to eſcape future wrath, by ſaying, "Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt will give thee light."

To underſtand what it is to be in Chriſt by faith, let us direct our attention to our knowledge of him, which is the firſt eſſential thing to the explanation of it. This head directly leads us to the object, which is the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. In this our faith ſhould be perfectly eſtabliſhed. It is certain if men poſſeſs no clear information of the precepts and doctrines inculcated and enforced by the Son of God, that this faith cannot be real, and muſt at leaſt be very ſuperficial and unſtable. They ſhould be perfectly acquainted with that goſpel which contains the promiſes of life eternal to every one who believes. But let it be remembered that it is impoſſible to believe without a knowledge of the object of this our faith. For this is the expreſs language

of St. Paul in the 10th chap. of Rom. and 14th verſe. The ſcope of which words are to ſhew that there muſt be a knowledge of the goſpel in order to our believing in Chriſt, and before we can hope to obtain ſalvation through him.

The words juſt cited clearly ſhew that a knowledge is requiſite for confirming our faith. And nothing is more natural than this preſuppoſition. For if men have a deſire to augment their happineſs, they muſt know what conſtitutes and promotes human happineſs. It is highly neceſſary to know that by Chriſt alone heaven is gained, that faith is the only way to him, and that hearing the word, which has Chriſt for its author and object, is the mean to obtain faith.

Having knowledge of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, and diſcovering its indiſpenſibility for ſalvation, we ſhould as rational creatures exhibit to this momentous knowledge our willing aſſent. When men ſee the doctrine of any perſon attended with the power of the Moſt High, and confirmed by miraculous atteſtations, then their aſſent is rational. This aſſent forces itſelf upon the contemplating mind. So powerful was the effect of Chriſt's miniſtry and miracles among men, that ſome of the principal

magiſtrates of the Jews mentioned in the 3d. chapter of the Evangeliſt St. John, and 42d. verſe, could not withhold it, though unwilling to become his diſciples, or profeſſors of the truth.

It is, therefore, obvious my beloved, that our faith is not completed either by a bare knowledge of Chriſt, and even by an addition of our aſſent or inward perſuaſion that he is the Son of God, but the knowledge muſt be augmented by a due confidence, and by applying his miſſion and mediatorial office to us, as individuals. If we have ſuch "ſtrong and powerful conviction of the divine miſſion, as to be ſtimulated to embrace him amidſt the torrent of infidelity, as Saviour and Lord, and at all times to keep his precepts and principles, as the rules of our conduct, we may then lay claim to the priveleges of ſaving faith. This confidence is principally diſcoverable in a firm reliance on his promiſes. Without this confidence all our knowledge and conviction of the hiſtorical truth therein contained will avail us little in the promotion of our union with Chriſt, And in order to ſhew that our confidence is real, it is neceſſary that it ſhould be attended with evident marks. Confidence neceſſa-

rily includes a calmneſs of mind among all the viciſſitudes, and oppoſition we meet with in this life. For it is the higheſt glory of a chriſtian to bear afflictions, and ſuffer perſecutions, for the ſake of the goſpel with an undaunted courage and invincible patience. This chriſtian virtue St. Paul praiſes the Theſſalonians for, ſaying, "we ourſelves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your perſecutions and tribulations which ye endure." 2. Theſ. 1. 4. Again, in the 12. chap. Heb. and 1, verſe, and innumerable other places, all which evidently prove the neceſſity of, and advantages derived from the ſtedfaſt exerciſe of patience. This is a divine gift which enables us to run the race of chriſtianity which God has ſet before us, in order to accompliſh it, and to attain the prize.

Another evidence of this high degree of faith, is, longanimity. Herein we ſhew to the world our ſtedfaſtneſs and perſeverance in caſe the help, or object of our faith ſeems to tarry. Notwithſtanding our hopes and expectations are ſometimes not fulfilled, and all our endeavors in the work of ſalvation fruſtrated, yet under all theſe preſſures and grievances do we not deſpair.

We, in imitation of the ſaints perſevere in well-doing and patient expectation and adherence to him under all difficulties and delays. For by ſuch endeavors we ſhall inherit the promiſes. Heb. 6, 12-15.

We may further obſerve, that if our confidence is to be a real characteriſtic of true faith in Chriſt, it muſt be aſſociated with hope. A ſtrong reliance and dependance upon the truth and goodneſs of the Almighty for the performance of thoſe things which he has promiſed, is a juſt part of our duty to God upon the foundation of his infallible truth. Whatever he has declared unto us is true, and accordingly ſhould claim our firm hope, and our hope ſhould be ſuch, as to afford us individually a firm belief and aſſurance of the enjoyment of future happineſs on our part. Thus the Holy Apoſtle Paul in the eighth chapter of Rom. and 24th verſe inſinuates by ſaying, "we are ſaved by hope. But hope which is ſeen is not hope, for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for. This is a ſynecdochical expreſſion, that is expreſſing a part of faith for the whole. Becauſe faith implies two things, the acceptance of Chriſt's mediatorial death, and our hope of eternal life. This expectation of our fu-

ture glorious ſtate, elevates our minds, and joyfully carries us through this vale of tears, to the bleſſed inheritance of the ſaints in heaven. Laſtly,

One more conſideration claims our attention, and that is, the neceſſity of profeſſing this our faith. This is the moſt inconteſtible evidence of the firmneſs of our intentions to ſerve God and exerciſe faith in the manner he has preſcribed to us. This is the criterion whereby to judge of our inward ſtate, and willingneſs to ſeek ſalvation alone through Jeſus Chriſt. For, ſays the apoſtle, "if thou wilt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation." Thus fully proving that faith and open confeſſion is required of him who would be accepted unto righteouſneſs and eternal life, of all who would wiſh to be united to the Son of God. This is the explanation of the former part of my text, of being in Chriſt.

2. Let us now briefly conſider the effects of this union. For the apoſtle's declaration is, "he is a new creature." It is to be obſerved that the ideas included in this expreſ-

ſion do not lead to a change of a phyſical nature. To ſuppoſe this, would be contrary to reaſon and ſcripture in the higeſt degree. For there is nothing new according to objects, which ſtrike our external ſenſes. It conſequently will not admit of this explication. But this new creation of which the apoſtle here ſpeaks, is a renovation of the inviſible part of man, the ſoul, an entire change of the internal faculties effected by being ingrafted into Chriſt through the laver of regeneration and faith.

Thoſe who would enjoy this ſtate muſt, as diſciples and followers of Chriſt, be renewed in the underſtanding, will and affections. Our underſtanding by the deceit of the Prince of darkneſs is obſcured: The work of grace therefore conſiſts in removing theſe difficulties, which impede the improvment of the mind in religious concerns. The impediments of the underſtanding are, ignorance and prejudice, from which ariſe in our will, anger, wrath, malice, blaſphemy, filthy communications, ſelf-conceit, all of which are far beneath a chriſtian, and tend to the final deſtruction of the ſoul. And it is to be obſerved that the happy change wrought in the mental faculties does not conſiſt merely in the acceſſion of light

to our underſtanding, but alſo in the happy change of our will.

This diſcovers itſelf by a predominant inclination to the new obedience, which the apoſtle declares is, "putting on the new man which is created after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. Unleſs this change is produced in both, the mind is not, and indeed connot be thoroughly attached to Chriſt. And ſuch muſt be the effects of this operation, as to produce an inward as well as an outward reformation.

How happy my beloved, are we in this new ſtate! For we have God as our pattern and example, according to whom the new man is framed in the ſoul. We are created ſays the inſpired penman in righteouſneſs. To be righteous, is to be in ſuch a ſtate as to have obtained a deliverance from all ſin and error; a deliverance acquired by virtue of Chriſt's atonement. We are become holy alſo. Now holineſs conſiſts in being in our inclinations conformable to the holy nature of God, and dependent on his will.

A farther evidence of our new ſtate is likewiſe diſcoverable in the affections. We are ever animated with a deſire to engage in the ſervice of our divine benefactor, and

continually preſſing forward to enjoy the promiſed reſt. When any flattering objects preſent themſelves to our view, with an intention to allure us into evil, or when the pleaſures of this life are put in competition with thoſe joys which we enjoy by Chriſt's Spirit dwelling in us, then do we the children of God, turn from them with diſdain. Our hearts are filled with horror and diſmay in beholding the evils which daily ſurround us. But what happineſs do we enjoy when the love of God rules our hearts. For in this alone is true felicity. The love which the regenerate man poſſeſſes, rouſes him from all ſupineneſs and worldly idleneſs. It animates the wheels and ſpring of action, that moved heavily before. It gives him a competent ſenſe to diſcover, a ſincere inclination to embrace, and a ſteady reſolution to hold faſt what is beſt and moſt pleaſing to his heavenly Father. Thus are the affections of him who is a member of Jeſus Chriſt, refined and modified.

Having ſeen the reformation produced in the powers of the the ſoul, turn your attention to and view the chriſtian in this life, and there you will evidently diſcover his genuine character and general utility. If we view him my beloved in a domeſtic

relation, what affectionate love do we see him administer to his dearest connections, what harmony dwells in every breast! All his powers are put in motion to excite his family and relations to the exercise of virtue and true holiness. Wherever and in whatever company he may be, his language speaks spirituality tending to alienate our thoughts and affections from sublunary things, and place them on things above.

In like manner in a civil capacity his life is circumspect. There you may trace in every respect the effects of his benevolence, There you may confide in him as a worthy and useful citizen. In this ample field all the civil and social duties are by him justly discharged and promoted. In his bosom does benevolence, justice, charity and sincerity centre. And in all his endeavors the principal object is, to assist every rank of men, and to promote their general interest and peace. Lastly

Consider him in an ecclesiastical relation. In this elevated and important station as a christian does he stand with merited dignity, and shine with peculiar lustre. He, as a devout hearer of the word of God commands by his example the awe and attention of mankind, and by his exhortations leads

them to the knowledge and performance of their duty; thereby drawing us from the roads of vice which lead to utter deſtruction, to the paths of virtue which conduct to true felicity. By him are all the moral and religious duties faithfully diſcharged. From him flow as the rays from the ſun, all divine virtues which diffuſe genial warmth through the powers of the ſoul, and cauſe the love of God to run through every vein; and animate the whole human frame. In ſhort turn your view to every part of this divine creation, and you may behold he image of its author deeply impreſſed. Such my affectionate friends is the degree of holineſs to which we ariſe, by a ſteady and uniform attachment to Chriſt and his injunctions.

From this view of the ſubject then let us be induced to reflect, and turn our whole attention to ourſelves individually. By theſe means we may be enabled to repreſent the true image of our ſtate to our ſerious reflection, and form a juſt eſtimate of human nature. Let me then intreat you to be attentive to the performance of the amiable and momentous duty of ſelf-examination. And let theſe intreaties be ever deeply impreſſed upon the mind, that they may havealein ſuitbfluence, both on public and

private conduct. Let us enter into ſerious reflections upon the ſeveral duties which ſuch a divine union neceſſarily and juſtly demands. Let us form ſuch reſolutions, which will ſtimulate us to the execution of them. With ſuch aids as theſe let us ſtir up chriſtian fortitude within us, and in full aſſurance ſtep forward to embrace our Saviour with heavenly joy and comfort. Do not, my beloved, reſt ſatisfied until you can with truth founded on experience declare, that the ſpirit of Chriſt dwells in you, for then, and then only, you are new creatures. Receiving then this divine principle within us we ſhall by its influence breathe the heavenly ſpirit, which alone reſides in Chriſt, and enjoy that peace and tranquility of which angels and ſaints participate in the realms of immortal glory. And the higheſt conſolation of the members of the Son of God is, that when the troubles and cares of this life ceaſe, when this earthly fabric ſhall diſſolve, they then will be received into the regions where pleaſure and praiſe have no end. Then ſhall they be inveſted with the white robes as thoſe, who ſurround the throne of God, then ſhall they bear the palms of heavenly peace, and enjoy the divine countenance for ever. And may the Lord God Almighty the Author and finiſh-

er of faith grant unto us this bleſſed inheritance for his Son Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, Amen.

SERMON III.

On Eccl. xii. 1.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou ſhall ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.

As the deſire and hope of man is to attain happineſs, is it not ſurpriſing and almoſt unaccountable, how many have entertained miſtaken notions reſpecting it and fallen into ſuch errors and extravagances in order to attain it? Whatever objects attract the attention moſt in this life, whatever purſuits are moſt conducive to pleaſure and intereſt here, men conſider of the higheſt importance, and in which as they unjuſtly conclude conſiſts their happineſs. This appears to have been the line of conduct king Solomon purſued in the early part of his life, for we find that his higheſt object was to partici-

pate of the pleaſures of this world, and give full ſcope to his inclinations. In conſequence of which he experienced the effects of ſuch actions, and was fully perſuaded that all his labours were unprofitable, and acquiſitions unſtable. He found them to be in the higheſt degree "Vanity and vexation of ſpirit."

Although the objects of this world have been and are ſo highly repreſented to the view and eſtimation of mankind, yet daily obſervation and experience holds out to our view, and convinces us of their vanity. The leaſt reflection will ſhew us its utter inſufficiency to create happineſs, and its certain tendency to render us miſerable. It will make us ſenſible of the wiſdom, and importance of being religious, and this in every ſtage of our exiſtence, but preſcribe to us the pure, ſubſtantial and eternal comforts which will ariſe from our attention to, and performance of this duty. To flatter ourſelves with the idea of calling to remembrance at certain periods the inſtructions given us in the ſacred writings, is unbecoming and trifling, but it is our indiſpenſible duty as rational and intelligent beings to obſerve and endeavor to fulfill the commandments of God through life. To

correct the errors and extravagances among men---to fortify their minds againſt the alluring temptations of earthly enjoyments, and alſo to make them cautious in the purſuit of them, appears to be the ſcope of the book of Eccleſiaſtes. To effect this, the preacher laments his folly in purſuing the objects of this world, and beautifully points out the vanity of which they are productive. But as we know that all men are naturally prone to evil, it is impoſſible to guard againſt every evil incident to human life; yet this inſpired writer inculcates the fear and obſervance of the commandments of God, and in the words of our text exhorts us to remember our Creator, as the moſt effectual means to guard againſt the temptations of youth, and thus improve the advantages of it. Remember &c.

In the proſecution of this diſcourſe. we are as the words naturally ſuggeſt to obſerve,---

I. What is our duty.
II. At what time we are to begin this.
III. The motives to enforce this duty.

With reſpect to our duty to God expreſsed by the words, "Remember now thy Creator;" let us attentively enquire what

it is, or what indications are neceſſary in order to ſhow that we comply with this injunction. Conſidering the relation in which we ſtand to God, which is here in the text, Creator, there are various means pointed out, by which we may manifeſt this diſpoſition towards him.

In this view, we are not only to remember that God is our Creator, our Saviour and Lord, but we are bound from this conſideration to call him to our remembrance, and this firſt from a principle of *reverence*. Since *reverence* according to the nature of things, is due to ſuch, as are ſuperior to us in the bond of relation, and ſince ſhewing to ſuch a mark of our eſteem, is ſo highly neceſſary to preſerve order, and good government among men; is it not much more our duty to give it to God, who is infinitely ſuperior to thoſe, whom we acknowledge our ſuperiors on earth? This part of our duty is to extend to all matters which are nearly connected with the things belonging to God. For in whatever chriſtian duties we are engaged, with reſpect to his word, his name, to his ſacraments, and other important ſervices, if they in the leaſt contribute to the promotion of his kingdom on earth, and our everlaſting happineſs, they are equally the ſame, as if we directed the mark of reſpect

immediately to himſelf. Another means calculated to exhibit our remembrance and love to God is through *obedience*. This duty ſo amiable and delightful in the ſight of him who is our Lord and Maſter, is ſo becoming and juſt, that a mere idea of our being children of the Moſt High, ſhould prompt us to engage in its obſervance. If we reflect that we are under the direction and providence of an Almighty Being---that he is ever willing to direct his creatures to the means of attaining glory and happineſs hereafter; is it not our duty, and would it not tend to our higheſt intereſt to ſhew our love and humility unto God? Now we may readily do this, by having a due reſpect to his commandments, which are clearly laid down before us in his divine word, and unleſs we obſerve and perform them, it can never be ſaid we give full evidence of our obedience to God our Creator. Theſe pure and pleaſant precepts which are able to lead us to our ſalvation are not difficult and grievous, but eaſy and light. What pious man is not thus delighted then, as to exclaim in the language of the Pſalmiſt "I delight to do thy will O God! yea thy law is within my heart.

Such is the effect of our obedience to the laws and commandments of God, that who-

ſoever will obſerve them, will in the end merit the heavenly appellation of bleſſed. Though it cannot be ſuppoſed that men in this frail and mortal ſtate, can continue without ſin, yet they muſt preſs towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus, conſtantly endeavouring to keep all his commandments, for this is our duty. And according to our Saviour's declaration, "On theſe commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In ſhort it is true religion to do whatever God commands; becauſe he from whom we have received all we poſſeſs, and to whom we are indebted in all performances, enjoins it.

We may cultivate in the third place a due eſteeem and remembrance of God, by worſhip. This, though it has in every age, and among every denomination of Chriſtians too little attracted their attention, yet is a duty of all others the moſt important and incumbent upon us to perform. In worſhipping, if we are faithful and ſincere in it, is the higheſt evidence of our love to God, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt.

It demonſtrates that we are true chriſtians, and conſequently if we remain ſo, gives us full hope of eternal life. It is not by external appearances, not by being cloathed with the garments of hypocriſy, and

pretentions to a holy and virtuous life, that can entitle us to the name of true worſhippers of God: but it is as the Apoſtle Paul declares, "by drawing near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience." This the nature of God demands, that we ſhould remember him with ſincerity, true devotion aud upright intentions, and this is what Chriſt in the evangeliſt John calls "worſhipping in ſpirit and in truth;" detaching our thoughts from the objects of this life which are temporal, and periſhing, and meditating on thoſe things which are eternal, and paſs not away.

II. In paſſing from the conſideration of our remembrance to our Creator, we are further to enquire at what time, we are to engage in it. Inattentive and regardleſs as men commonly are, to the duties and ſervices they owe to God, it is notwithſtanding a reaſonable duty, and of intrinſic value to obſerve them. But the nature of man in general is ſuch, that all objects of this world attract their notice, far more than thoſe which direct them to the things above, that is, the improvement of religious knowledge here, and the means of attaining the enjoyment of heaven hereafter. And even ſhould they incline to ſet their affections on

ſpiritual objects, they defer ſuch engagements to a more advanced period of life. They wiſh firſt to partake of youthful mirth, firſt experience the bad effects, and be convinced of their folly, and then apply themſelves to this pleaſant duty. But how vain and inconſiderate is ſuch conduct, ſince we are ſtrangers and ſojourners as were all our fathers. Since this earthly tabernacle is not the place of our eternal abode, but that we look for another, and know not the time of our departure from this preſent life, how neceſſary and becoming is it for us always to ſet our affections on things above. But more particularly are we as the text directs us, to remember this our duty in the "days of our youth."

That youth is the moſt important part of our life in which to begin our ſpiritual enquiries, and to cultivate heavenly virtues, is evident from two important conſiderations.

From the time of our birth, until we attain manhood, every meaſure and opportunity is given us, in which we may be inſtructed in the arts and ſciences neceſſary for the accomodations of this life, together with every duty and qualification requiſite to attain happineſs and glory hereafter. In our infancy we particularly claim the good

will and affection of our parents, and conſequently are continually under the ſound of parental admonitions and inſtructions, which as our minds are leſs cloyed by ſurrounding objects, than at any other period of our life, can have the beſt effect in enlightening and improving it. As we advance in age, we are under the direction and guidance of teachers and paſtors; the former inſtructing us in all the liberal arts, and ſtoring the mind with all knowledge uſeful and neceſſary to civil life; the latter inſtilling the mind with the more important branches of religious inſtruction, and being guides to us in the ways of advancing our happineſs in this life, they become a means of exalting our felicity in the world to come. Not only at this period are we favoured with the pleaſing directions given us by our parents and guardians, but we are under the inſpection of the community at large. In all our youthful miſconduct we are continually detected, and often warned with parental and tender affection. There is no other part of our life in which we may ſo well exert our faculties to the improvement of our ſouls, as in our younger days, and from beginning in youth, to lay the foundation of all our future purſuits, ariſe the moſt friendly and laſting improvements,

Our mind being free from the vices and extravagances with which we are continually ſurrounded, and open to receive every thing preſented to it, muſt naturally be ſuſceptible of the deepeſt impreſſion and of the moſt laſting effects. It is true, the evil propenſities of our nature, together with the cuſtoms and paſſions of the world do continually tend to corrupt our tender minds in unexperienced age, and frequently attract our unguarded attention ſo far, as to prompt us to purſue them; yet the firſt impreſſions we have received from the precepts of religion, with the leaſt reflection attending them, are ſufficient entirely to over-balance the efficacy which may apparently attend them. The words in the text "Remember now," perfectly ſhew the intention of the preacher's exhortation, which is to caution us againſt the errors of falling into inattention and ſlothfulneſs, and defering the remembrance of God, or which is the ſame of repentance. Repentance is ſo eſſential to the well-being of the ſoul and body, that to obtain it, demands our earlieſt and utmoſt endeavors. We are therefore exhorted to enter upon it now, with the utmoſt zeal and ardor, to be conſtant in the purſuit of it. Such ought to be the rule of our conduct in youth, and ſuch is our duty through

life. Were men more attentive and perſevering in their laudable endeavors they would aſſuredly know that they laboured not in vain, but with a joyful expectation of being rewarded in heaven.

III, This leads me in the laſt place to conſider the *motives* which ſhould particularly induce us to engage in the ſervice of our Creator in early life, or in other words, "While the evil days come not, or the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them." What a powerful reaſon is here given to enforce the command! For, enter, is the meaning of the ſerious preacher without heſitation upon this important duty of ſerving your Creator ---when all the faculties of the mind are yet under your direction and controul, when you yet retain the ſtrength and vigour of the corporeal ſyſtem before old age, and its natural attendants come, which will repreſent to you the objects of this life as tranſitory. Days and years of which you will truly ſay, I have no pleaſure in them. It is high time to hearken then, my reſpected brethren, to this voice. For this in a proper ſenſe is to be called to day.

The certainty of ſuch evil days make the exhortation in the text highly juſt and neceſſary. It is juſt, I ſay, becauſe it

comes from him, who had experienced the effects of such vain conduct; and necessary, as it might prompt others to lead a more virtuous life, and avoid the evil days and years, which a neglect of this duty will certainly effect,

To convince us that these evil days will approach, let us have recourse to our reason and daily experience. If God has given to man certain laws, and enjoined on us certain duties, which all nature testifies--If he implanted in us a soul endowed with understanding and will, and made us capable to fulfil the laws and injunctions laid before us; it certainly follows that if we do not comply with them, the penalties annexed to these statutes must assuredly be our recompence. The duty which we have at this time been considering to "remember our Creator," is not by any means to be trifled with, or to be considered as of little importance. For it is inculcated through the whole of the sacred writings, and found from meditation and enquiry to contain all the duties of a true christian. If therefore we disregard such an essential command which is here specified, we mustexpect the consequences, for the evil days and years which come in the progress of time will scarcely admit of a reformation. The most

deplorable and irretrievable conſequence of our deferring the performance of this injunction to old age, is this, it will render us incapable to effect a true reformation. It muſt be obvious to every reflecting mind, that if an entrance into the kingdom of God demands a conſtant obedience to his rules in this life, then to defer it till life declines and expires, muſt put it beyond the limits of our power to do our duty, or accompliſh a true change of heart. The certainty of this aſſertion is not alone founded upon rational principles, but the experience of men in paſt ages, and even in the preſent have every where evidenced the truth of it. How many in conſequence of having ſpent their youthful days in the purſuit of earthly enjoyments, are under the neceſſity of reaping the fruit of their labour in old age in diſcontent! Their time is truly nothing but days and years replete with vanity and vexation of ſpirit. When men have arrived to that period of life which is generally termed old age, how few are there, who retain that ſtrength and vivacity either of their mental or corporeal faculties which they were capable to exerciſe in youth. This the moſt ſuperficial obſerver muſt and does daily experience, which clearly evinces man's utter inſufficiency to accompliſh his

duty. We are told by our Saviour, that when we have done all which is commanded us, we are yet unprofitable ſervants, for we have done but that which was our duty to do. Therefore to neglect any part of theſe commandments muſt cauſe you to be deficient, and come far ſhort of the inward reformation required of you, Remember &c.

Thus I have pointed out to you, my beloved in Chriſt, ſome of the duties contained in the exhortation of the words of our text, words ſufficiently energetic to ſhew every reflecting mind the reaſonableneſs and juſtice of ſuch a call and to convince you of the importance of ſerving your Creator in early life. This leads me to preſs it upon your minds, by making ſome uſeful reflections on the preſent deplorable ſtate of mankind in general.

The moſt affecting circumſtance which we diſcover in our intercourſe with the world, is the ſtate and conduct of our youth. Here our view meets with numberleſs ſcenes of action, which deteſtable as they may appear muſt be conſidered as the effect of parental inattention, or over-rated indulgence. From theſe two ſources flow almoſt all the vices and extravagancies we every where meet with in the conduct of youth. How inexcuſable are all thoſe whom the Supreme

Being has favored with the care of their offspring, when they neglect to teach them in the things belonging to God and religion. For the light of nature eminently teaches us, that parents entruſted with the care of their children in their younger days are bound to furniſh their minds with the ſeeds of virtue and happineſs. And this is moſt certainly true, which we may very eaſily exemplify. For if parents are naturally inclined to give inſtruction in matters which concern this life, which we all know is temporal; how much more commendable and neceſſary is it to know thoſe things which are heavenly and of everlaſting importance! Further, if reverence and obedience to parents are required from youth, it is much more neceſſary and reaſonable that they ſhould be trained up in the fear and nurture of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. They ſhould be informed of the conſequences of falling into error and vice. They ſhould be taught the commandments of their Creator; becauſe from him we all have our being. Such directions as theſe would afford leſſons of inſtruction, and lead them to the knowledge of their duty in every reſpect---Such would ſecure the honor, ſervice, and obedience they were obliged to give their parents. But what can be expected when no

attention is paid to inſtruct them in that which is uſeful and profitable for a life to come, no care to prevent the mind from imbibing what may be detrimental to their ſalvation? The conſequences will be, they will be induced to follow the vices and extravagancies they every where meet with, and conſequently be in a condition unprepared for the reception of Chriſt, and unfit for an entrance into his kingdom. Such I am ſenſible every chriſtian, and well-diſpoſed obſerver muſt diſcover to be the unhappy ſtate of many of our youth at preſent. But circumſtances ſtill more affecting to the minds of all true chriſtians, and very injurious alſo to the minds of the young, are the *bad examples* given them by thoſe who have arrived to years of diſcretion, and which is too generally the caſe by parents and guardians themſelves. This aſſertion tho' it may not ſtrike the mind of every *intereſted* hearer is notwithſtanding juſt, and this not only verified by a few, but numberleſs examples in life.

How frequently does it occur that parents inſtead of ſetting examples to their children, of a holy and virtuous life---inſtead of endeavoring to draw their attention from the pride and vanity of the world---inſtead of eradicating as much as poſſible the evil luſts

and paſſions they poſſeſs by nature, and daily imbibe; on the contrary repreſent a life of infidelity and ungodlineſs. The general tenour of the conduct of many parents is no other than blaſpheming, rioting, and being intoxicated, and violating in every other manner the law and commandments of God. From ſuch a conduct my brethren what ideas muſt we form of their internal ſtate? What conſequences may we reaſonably conclude, does ſuch a violation of the will and commandments of God naturally produce? Our ſenſes muſt immediately lead us to the natural ſuppoſition. That they are men deſtitute of every upright, every divine impreſſion and conſequently under the controul of the devil. And we cannot ſuppoſe that ſuch a line of conduct as above deſcribed, will alone affect their happineſs; but muſt certainly extend to, and influence the minds of the unexperienced among youth, and that in ſuch a high degree, as frequently to cauſe them to trace too cloſely the example ſet before them.

Let me intreat you, particularly thoſe who are advanced in age to conſider your internal ſtate, and view your external practice. I beſeech you to relinquiſh all your former evil ways and crimes. Let St. Paul's admonition to the Epheſians be deeply im-

printed on your minds, "Walk circumſpectly not as fools; but as wiſe, redeeming the time; becauſe the days are evil." See that you begin to inſtil in the minds of your children the principles of virtue and religion. Teach them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and ſo continue to bring them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. But with what language ſhall I addreſs you, who are now advancing and entering upon the ſtage of life. Have you not heard the goſpel of your bleſſed Saviour pronounced unto you? Have you not been inſtructed in its principles? if ſo, it is preſumed you have been directed in the paths of virtue and true holineſs, for ſuch is the end and intention of Chriſtianity.

Therefore apply yourſelves with all diligence in cultivating the precepts your Lord has delivered to you. And if any ſparks of heavenly virtue have been formed by theſe your endeavours, let them not be extinguiſhed; but rather kindle them in a blaze, ever burning to the glory and honor of your God. In all your walk through life, let prudence, temperance, juſtice, benevolence and gratitude be the rules of your conduct. Prudence to admoniſh you; temperance to reſtrain you in your purſuits, juſtice to guide

your hand, benevolence to warm your heart, and gratitude to inſpire you with true devotion. In a word let this comprehenſive rule be embraced and fulfilled by every one preſent: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. Such will afford you happineſs in this life, and in that which is to come, for there are the manſions of eternal felicity---there are the crowns of Glory reſerved for all thoſe, who love their Lord and Saviour. "Remember then thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Amen.

SERMON IV.

On 1. Cor. 1. xxx.

But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us, wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.

To judge of the nature and eſtimation of things merely from their external appearances, is a cuſtom too prevalent among, and highly inconſiſtent with the duty of rational creatures. It is owing to this evil propenſity among men, that they are frequently eſteemed either above, or beneath their true value. From this ſuperficial view of things numberleſs erroneous opinions have been formed. It has been the cauſe of the moſt lamentable effects, for it is well known that it was the principal reaſon, which gave birth to the ill reception of our bleſſed Saviour, and the precepts which have been given unto us. It is the only circumſtance which cauſes chriſtians to be conſidered as a degenerate kind of beings in the view of the world. But how improper is ſuch a conduct among men, particularly thoſe, who profeſs to have a ſuperior degree of knowledge, who would wiſh to be conſidered as men guided in for-

ming their judgment by reaſon, and the nature of things. The reverſe of this appears to be the method purſued by the generality of men in judging of chriſtians. Miſguided by ſome external appearance, men of this world, whoſe ſtrong reaſon, and acuteneſs of wit have not permitted them to ſtoop to the ſimplicity of the goſpel, conſider thoſe who are true chriſtians, as weak, poor, ignorant, ſuperſtitious beings. As *weak*, becauſe they do not engage in all the undertakings of worldly men; *poor*, as generally not poſſeſſed of nobility of birth, riches, honour, and all the external gifts of Providence; As *ignorant*, becauſe not ſkilled in all the arts and ſciences which compoſe human knowledge; *ſuperſtitious*, by giving aſſent to, and grounding their faith upon ſuch ſeeming contradictions as appear in the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. But however mean and deſpicable the true advocates of chriſtianity may appear in their external condition; yet have they this conſolation, that they are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of God, that their heavenly Father will own and reward his faithful though deſpiſed ſervants at the great day, and make it evident to angels and men that he accepts not the perſons of princes, nor regards the rich more than the poor. As a ſuperabundant

recompence for believing chriſtians, the apoſtle informs them what they are in Chriſt Jeſus, how wealthy they are as Chriſtians, that Chriſt is made unto them *righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption*, and all thoſe received by virtue of their intereſt in, and union with Chriſt, combine to elevate them to the rank of the wiſeſt men in the world. But of him are ye in Chriſt &c. Such is the real condition of the children of God, however different from this their external appearence may be. Theſe words evidently point out the inexhauſtible treaſure found in and received from Chriſt.

That we may know what this treaſure is, which we receive from Chriſt, let us draw our attention to the words of the text. In the conſideration of them we are to ſhew,

I. That righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption centre in Chriſt.
II. That by enjoying ſuch gifts, we chriſtians alone have found out true wiſdom.

The Apoſtle in our text aſſerts that Chriſt is *righteouſneſs*. The perfect righteouſneſs which ſhines conſpicuouſly in the character of our bleſſed Saviour, is imputed unto believing chriſtians. Chriſt is made unto us right-

couſneſs by relieving us from two heavy burthens; the one, *guilt of ſin*; the other *divine wrath* as the conſequence of it.

From the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents we lay under the inſupportable load of ſin, and by conſequence became the certain objects of death; for ſays St. Paul "the wages of ſin is death." Rom. 8, 23. But that we might be delivered from this guilt Chriſt died for us. Herein was the love of Jeſus Chriſt manifeſted to the fallen depraved poſterity of Adam. In conſequence of this divine love, we were freed from the greateſt maſs of iniquities, for, "on him was laid the iniquity of us all." Now therefore, by the death of Chriſt, we by faith, being made his members have ſuffered death with him, and thus in reality have paid the wages of ſin.

Our union and fellowſhip with Chriſt cauſes us to participate of the influence of his Spirit, and ſo live and grow up in Chriſt, being united to him, as members to the head. It is from this bleſſed union that we experience him, as the righteouſneſs made unto us, becauſe as ſinners we are puniſhed, being crucified with him, and buried in his death: but as new creatures, we are fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone. The ſame ſpirit dwells in us, that dwelled in

him, and we are partakers of the holineſs which reſided in that holy tabernacle his body. All his actions we claim as our own. As man the ſon of man belongs to us. He lived for us and he died for us. He had no ſins of his own, to expiate with his death. No! he was made for us a ſin-offering, that we might be made righteouſneſs. And as we thus are righteouſneſs before God, only in conſequence of this our union with him, he is juſtly by the prophet Jeremiah twice called the Lord our righteouſneſs, Jer. 23d. 33d. This conſideration alone is the ſource of a good conſcience: this inſpires the ſoul with the deſire for the judgment day. This inſtils into the breaſt that perfect love which expels fear. For by Chriſt as our righteouſneſs we are perfect before God, and no judge can condemn us.

Chriſt is our righteouſneſs by freeing us from divine wrath. We who are no more the ſubjects of ſin, are now exempted from death, for this was the conſequence of ſin. And as we are beeome righteous by the death of Chriſt, ſo do we enjoy our freedom from it. For ſays St. Paul "ſcarcely for a righteous man would one die; yet peradventure for a good man ſome would even dare to die;" that is to ſay: before the death of Chriſt we were under the ſentence of death,

otherwiſe Chriſt would not have died for us, for although ſome perſon might die for a good man: no one will ever die for another, who is accounted juſt, and therefore cannot be under the ſentence of death.

As we therefore were under this ſentence, and Chriſt's death was imputed unto us: death ought not, cannot, and for the ſake of the Son of God will not reign over us. The true cauſe of this our freedom from death is only our union with him. "I am crucified, ſays St. Paul with Chriſt, nevertheleſs, I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himſelf for me." For a chriſtian crucified with Chriſt, enjoys a life of juſtification in this ſtate of trial, with a hope of a life of glory hereafter. Chriſt is therefore made righteouſneſs to every one that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, for their faith is counted unto them for righteouſneſs. Rom. 4th chap. 5th verſe.

As we experience that Chriſt is our righteouſneſs, ſo we likewiſe find that he is our *ſanctification*. Such an inexhauſtible treaſure we find in the bleſſed Saviour, that we derive every virtue from him, and this is accompliſhed in a two-fold manner; both inter-

nally and externally. We are renewed in our internal conſtitution by the operations of the ſpirit of God.

This the Apoſtle elegantly declares in the 6th chapter and 11th verſe of this epiſtle, where he ſpeaking of the miſerable condition of ſinners before converſion, ſays "and ſuch were ſome of you: but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God." How expreſſive are theſe words of the glorious change effected by means of God's mercy, and ſanctifying grace. "Ye are waſhed." This intimates that they were before polluted and defiled, and that therefore it be indiſpenſably neceſſary to be made clean by the ſacramental waſhing of baptiſm, the laver of regeneration. "Ye are ſanctified." We are purified in our hearts and natures by the ſanctifying influences of divine grace, and in conſequence of this; are enabled to do the will of God. Influenced by the Spirit of God we are inveſted with ſpiritual power, a prerogative not enjoyed by impenitent ſinners; becauſe they are the ſlaves of ſin.

We who are guided by the holy Spirit find the corruptions of our nature daily more removed; we can reſiſt the temptations of the world, and riſe ſuperior to all the efforts of

Satan. This is a part of the chriſtian's armour Eph. 6th chap. and 17th verſe, by which he is enabled to withſtand the wiles of the devil, and chearfully complete the chriſtian warfare.

A further internal evidence of our ſanctification derived from the ſon of God is a principle of holineſs inſtilled in our breaſts. For being cleanſed by the ſpirit of Chriſt we are renewed in our whole conſtitution.

We have new deſires, new inclinations, new affections, "For old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new." We are new creatures, and therefore live a life of true holineſs "for the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us Rom. 5th chap. and 5th verſe." Our union with Chriſt by his Spirit ſhould be, and is the principal cauſe why we ſhould fill our minds with love and gratitude to our divine benefactor.

Whoſe breaſt ſhould not overflow with the moſt tender affection and love to him who firſt loved us. 1. John 4th chap. 19th verſe. Who would, being ſenſible of the ineſtimable benefits derived from him, be yet unwilling to acknowledge his goodneſs? Who would be ſlothful in recalling to mind this condeſcenſion? Who would not view his Saviour with ſincere eſteem? Can any perſon

believe the hiſtory of Jeſus, and yet be void of that love which humanizes mankind, ſo little filled with gratitude, which is due to a Redeemer from death and eternal wrath? But all our gratitude ſhews itſelf in obedience.

By virtue of Chriſt's being our ſanctification we are not only renewed in the ſoul, but as a conſequence of this internal change, are made to conform our external actions to the will of God. Our whole external deportment receives a ſenſible and perfect renovation. We are free from all kinds of external ſin, which pollutes and defiles us. Of theſe ſins we have a catalogue given in St. Paul's 5th. chap. to the Galatians: ſome of which are adultery, fornication, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs &c. from all which we who are ſanctified through Chriſt, become altogether free, ſo that no veſtige of them can be found in a true chriſtian. The very ſound of theſe names fills his breaſt and holy ear with abhorance.

In like manner we are freed from all evil converſation, for we are moved by the Spirit of God, to order all our converſation aright.

Chriſt is laſtly ſaid to be our *redemption*. The ſacred writer in this aſſertion, you may perceive, does not mean that Chriſt redeemed mankind from human ſlavery and bon-

dage as that of the Egyptians or Babylonians. This, although ſomething ſimilar to it was the peculiar idea they had formed of the nature of his office, and extent of his power; yet it was not the object of the Supreme Being in ſending his only ſon in this world. Neither do we find that it was our Saviour's object to redeem men from the grievances of the Roman yoke, an erroneous notion, then prevailing among the generality of Iſraelites.

As theſe were not the ſcope of the words of the Apoſtle in calling Chriſt our redemption, then let us conſider them in a different light. Chriſt is our redemption by freeing us from the curſe of the law. St. Paul in his 3d chap. Gal. and 13th verſe, expreſly declares that "Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us." Notwithſtanding the threats of the law, a believer is freed from the malediction of it. by Chriſt being a curſe for him. Our obnoxiouſneſs to the divine wrath is removed. The puniſhment threatened unto us is diſſolved, and conſequently the curſe of the law can have no effect upon us, for Chriſt was made a curſe for us, that is he took the curſe upon himſelf. Our ſin became his, by willingly taking the puniſhment. As Chriſt was made ſin for us, 2 Cor. 5, 21. ſo was hem ade a curſe for us. Now as he was made

ſin not by contracting ſin, but by becoming the ſin offering for ſin, and ſuffering the puniſhment of it, ſo he was made a curſe, by ſuſtaining that mode of death which the law ſtiles accurſed, Deut. 21, 23. We are therefore, made free from the curſe of the law, by Chriſt becoming our Redeemer.

We participate of Chriſt's redemption by ſeeing us extricated from the danger, and from the dread of death. For in conſequence of our deliverance from the terrors of the law, which filled us with continual apprehenſions of their execution, we are no longer harraſſed with the ideas of corruption and mortality. Of thiswe are aſſured in the 2nd. chap. of Hebrews 14th. verſe, where it is expreſſed in theſe words" Chriſt by aſſuming fleſh and blood had the intention t deliver us, who through fear of death wer. all our life time ſubject to bondage.

Such is our condition in this life, effected by Chriſt as our Redeemer. In this amiable light, my brethren, let us behold him, in this capacity let us perceive his power. In our dying hour we ſhall be able to judge of this ſoul penetrating conſideration, I know that my Redeemer lives!

The laſt benefit ariſing from the glorious ranſom paid by the death of Chriſt as our Redeemer, is perfect freedom from condem-

nation and eternal punishment. Herein is the greatest and most perfect love manifested by the Son of God to sinners. Their names are in the book of life. Conscious of having sinned, they come not into judgment.

II. Consider how these enjoyments make Christ unto us wisdom To trace and enjoy true wisdom it is necessary we should know wherein it does not, and wherein it does consist.

True wisdom which is the only treasure we should seek for, is not derived from *heathenish philosophy*. It has been the great object of philosophy in all ages to direct men to the means of attaining happiness Now the philosophy of the heathens contained several very important and moral precepts. Their sciences were adapted to merit applause, yet inadequate to produce that happiness which is permanent and real. It is true, they entertained some notions of a superior being, but when speaking of him, they compared him to almost every species of the irrational and even inanimate part of the creation. Their wisdom could not lead them to form just ideas of a God. The Greeks in particular, who had arrived to an eminent degree of knowledge, who were held in great estimation for their literary attainments, were yet ignorant of that true

wiſdom which owes its origin to the revelation of God.

It is further evident that the wiſdom under conſideration is not derived from the wiſdom calculated to ſweeten ſocial life and increaſe terreſtrial happineſs. Such it cannot be, for the object of this wiſdom differs from the object of Chriſt's doctrine, and both vary with reſpect to their nature and extent. The latter has for its object Chriſt; the former directs its aim to this world. The one is employed in attaining the means for arriving to truth, and actuates men to deal uprightly: the other is engaged in the acquiſition of worldly conſequence, and prompts men to act with injuſtice. The one is celeſtial and of endleſs duration; the other, terreſtrial, and of momentary continuance. The chief deſign of human wiſdom is to accomodate men in purſuing the moſt prudent means of accumulating wealth, and gratifying themſelves in all the emoluments here acquired. Theſe are the diſadvantages ariſing from heatheniſh philoſophy and earthly ſkilfulneſs, from both of which we cannot extract that wiſdom, which true chriſtians alone find in Jeſus Chriſt.

True wiſdom is derived from that ſource, which relieves us from ignorance in matters

which are eternal. We my brethren, diſcover this bleſſing not from the light of nature and mere reaſon, but from revelation. Herein are contained rules and precepts far ſuperior to the moſt refined philoſophy that has been, and will be compiled by human underſtanding, becauſe they yield us a knowledge of God. This is our only guide to heaven, and is in the language of the Pſalmiſt " a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. Pſa. 119th 105th verſe. It not only leads us to the knowledge of God, but happily communicates to men the true nature of his perfections. To mortals, when in a ſtate of ignorance, it is impoſſible to diſcover by the mere, though excellent works, of nature the infinity, immenſity, wiſdom, ſanctity, omnipreſence, and other glorious perfections of the great Ruler of the univerſe.

True wiſdom is likewiſe a deliverance from blindneſs in ſelf-knowledge. The accompliſhment of ſelf-knowledge has ever been an object of enquiry among men, but it could not be obtained where heavenly wiſdom did not hold out its light. It has ever appeared of ſuch importance to promote the happineſs of mankind, that philoſophy has directed its diſciples more or leſs to it. So much ſo that a ſect of philoſo-

phers had this precept fixed on the doors of their ſchools, "Know thyſelf." Fromthis ſtate of ignorance is the religion of Jeſus Chriſt adapted to free us. For it repreſents to us our depraved condition. We are thereby enabled to diſcover how deeply we are involved in original ſin, which has a tendency to make us humble before God, and earneſtly to look up to him for mercy. The goſpel of our Saviour is the only monitor of our preſent ſinful ſtate. We are therein informed of the conſequences of cheriſhing evil thoughts and appetites, forbidden words and actions. Our whole tranſgreſſion of the laws of God is therein clearly laid open to our view. But it likewiſe directs our attention to conſider our condemnation at the Judgment day. It ſhews the conſequences if we reject it and diſregard its author. It aſſures us that an eternal puniſhment will be the certain reſult of ſuch actions.

True wiſdom muſt further be that which ſhews the way whereby men may be reconciled with God. What my brethren can appeaſe an offended Godwith fallen degenerate ſinners? Nothing but the blood of the only begotten Son of God Jeſus Chriſt whereby he made an atonement for us,

and consequently obtained favour in the sight of God. This is the wisdom found out by the Son of God, by contriving means which would contract God and man, and form a perfect union. This is of more value than all the sacrifices of bullocks and goats which were only typical of this true and essential atonement.

True wisdom teaches to pursue that which is attended with power. But this we receive through our Lord by his Spirit. His Spirit actuates us, inspires us with that power, which destroys all sinful and immoral practices, and makes us walk as children of God a power, which no worldly wisdom ever could grant, no moral philosophy ever pretended to instil.

The last mark of the wisdom found in the redemption of Jesus is that it insures eternal life. Herein divine wisdom excels all other. The attainment of life eternal, is a treasure, which all human knowledge cannot procure. Notwithstanding it has been considered as a desirable object of philosophy at all times, yet its efforts have proved vain. It is for this reason my brethren, that the fathers of the primitive church have frequently stiled the religion of Jesus Christ the *true philosophy*. And such every christian experiences it to be. Thus we find that

righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption are in Chriſt, all of which declare him unto us the ſource of wiſdom. Let only this great truth be brought home to our conſciences.

A retroſpective view of our depravity by the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, and a reflection of our apoſtacy from God by actual diſobedience, ſerve to repreſent to us the corruption of our nature and the degraded ſtate in which we at preſent are. Were we, my brethren, more frequently to exerciſe our faculties in this, though unuſual, yet truly important conſideration, it would undoubtedly lead us to form the moſt happy concluſions. It would cauſe us to improve our temporal life, and promote our eternal happineſs. Your thoughts from the conſideration of our text, my beloved, ſhould be employed in enquiring into the neceſſiy of ſuch a ſaviour, as the apoſtle here deſcribes to us. Are you, my brethren, in want of ſanctification, righteouſneſs and redemption? Do you, and did you ever feel your loſt ſtate? Are you not aſſured your doctrine teaches you, that you brought ſin with you into this world? Does not conſcience inform you, that you daily have increaſed this unhappy treaſure. From what quarter do you now expect your ſafety

from the natural conſequences of ſuch a condition? or had you never any apprehenſions of being condemned for this your ſtate? If ſo, let Chriſt, I beg you enlighten you. He is willing to do this, and more, for he will procure you deliverance. You cannot extricate yourſelves by your own power. It is merely through the Son of God, that you obtain perfect freedom. Make then my brethren ſerious enquiries for this great perſonage. He is to be found by every true penitent. He will relieve you from the burthen of your ſins, all your miſeries will be removed, and every conſolation given you. He will give reſt unto your ſouls, if you only make application to him. Call upon him in prayer,---in your private retirements, in your concerns, in anxieties and perplexities: commit all the concerns of your ſoul to ſuch a wiſe phyſician---He is made by God the Father, what he is very willing to be to you. He pleads his Father's will, the nature of his office, the ſcope of his miſſion, the friendſhip of all the heavenly hoſt for the human race, when in reality his own bowels being troubled for the loſt, but returning ſinner, extort irreſiſtibly the reſolution in the breaſt of the commiſerating high prieſt: I will

ſurely have mercy upon him. Jer. 31, 20. How it can be, that ſuch ſinners can be ſaved and reformed, as you are, this leave to him, who in exerciſing his ſanctifying and redeeming power on you and on the millions of your condition, declares himſelf to be the wiſdom of God. By being able to ſave to the uttermoſt all ſuch as come, he unfolds a myſtery which angels deſired to look into.

SERMON V.

On 1 John ii, 15, 16, 17.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.
For all that is in the world, the luſt of the fleſh, and the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
And the world paſſeth away, and the luſt thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

A VIEW of the world is one of the grandeſt ſcenes which can be exhibited to the human eye. And in order to form a juſt eſtimate of the whole, its beauties and defects muſt neceſſarily attract our view, and claim our conſideration. So contracted and partial is the human mind, that a careful circumſpection in ſuch a contemplation is abſolutely requiſite. Even then, many objects which are the moſt conſpicuous and intereſting paſs unobſerved; while others more obſcure and imperfect obtain the higheſt applauſe. Wherever we turn our view, ſuch objects deck this ſublunary region, and

among every claſs of men ſuch actions cloud the human character. The objects alluded to, and which form this ſplendid ſcene, are the pomps and pleaſures, riches and magnificence, and whatever elſe attracts the attention and forms the glory of man. A view of ſurrounding objects will fully juſtify theſe obſervations. For ſuch, experience teaches us, is the aſpiring and extreme pride of mortal creatures, that unleſs they can keep up immenſe opulence, and dwell in ſplendid edifices, their deſires are not ſatiated, and their minds never content.

But how different would the tenor of man's conduct be, was he to reflect upon the vanity and inſtability of earthly things? They would appear far leſs ſuperb, and not entitled to the eſteem and admiration, which mankind ſo laviſhly beſtow upon them. It is according to the utility and duration of things that we ought to value them. Objects thus permanent and pure ought to fix our view, and to the attainment of ſuch ſhould all our endeavors be directed. On this earth, however all is imperfect and tranſient. The moſt ſplendid performances which we daily behold, are like ſhadows projected by clouds, which the wind ſwiftly drives along. The whole frame of nature changes, decays, and comes to an end.

Whatever we behold and enjoy gradually tends to decay. The whole material ſyſtem is inadequate for perpetual duration. However magnificent and ſtable the univerſe may appear, it was only a temporary fabric on which human beings were placed for trial and probation. We are therefore very juſtly commanded "not to love the world, nor the things that are in the world," for they can yield us no permanent felicity. But we are reminded to place our affections upon the abode of its author, and to be ever prompt and ſtedfaſt in the performance of his will, in order once to enjoy that inheritance, and thoſe pleaſures which endure through all eternity. The ſcope of the words now before us, is manifeſtly to ſhew, that an exceſſive love of the world, or its enjoyments is in the higheſt degree unjuſtifiable and if ſo, highly criminal in us conſidered as chriſtians and mortal creatures. In diſcourſing then upon this propoſition which the text ſuggeſts, it is my purpoſe to ſpeak

I. Of the love of the world or in what it conſiſts.
II. Its unjuſtifiableneſs.

Agreably then to this method in confirming in your minds the truths ſuggeſted in

the text, let us examine the import of this expreſſion "Love not the world," and this will lead us to conſider the nature of ſuch a predeliction for the world. This paſſion which is ſo predominant in the human breaſt, may be defined to be an extenſive attachment to thoſe pleaſures and objects, which tend to deſtroy our inclination to the future, and confine our ideas and deſires too much to the preſent world. This deſcription of the love of this world at once excludes all ſinful earthly enjoyments, and particularly forbids us to place our affections upon them. For of this exceſſive fondneſs are the words of the Apoſtle to be underſtood in ſaying "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." If not, how would they accord with that command of the great St. Paul when he declares "uſe this world." But obſerve with what caution it is added, "as not abuſing it," evidently juſtifying a moderate uſe, and limited enjoyment of this life; but totally rejecting a line of conduct which exceeds the limits of moderation and decency, It is only the abuſe of things, which is unjuſtifiable. A conduct which ſhews that we prefer this to the other world, is only the thing ſinful in the ſight of God. From this general idea which is given us of the Apoſtle's

exhortation, we are led to offer ſome conſiderations upon the diſtinguiſhing properties of what we call worldly pleaſure.

The whole ſcene of earthly gratifications is compriſed in, and may be viewed under the following repreſentations. The firſt of theſe in the language of the apoſtle, is, "the luſt of the fleſh, or as it may be expreſſed by the comprehenſive term concupiſcence. Various are the circumſtances to which our ideas may here be directed. For in effect it includes all theſe ſenſual delights and enjoyments which undermine and deſtroy the happineſs of individuals, and the peace of ſociety, becauſe they are incompatible with the internal delight of the ſoul in God. Which are theſe enemies to a converſation with God? they are ſuch as chambering, wantonneſs, rioting, intoxications, and ſuch like ſeries of ſcenes, which in general fill up the life of man. Let us but for a moment repreſent to our minds the innumerable profligate, and diſſolute actions, we behold among mankind and the reſult will be, a conviction of the corruption and depravity of the human heart. It will exhibit that original wickedneſs, which inclines men to ſin and evil in its various forms and degrees. In ſhort the luſts of the fleſh war

againſt the peace of the ſoul, and continually marr all our pious endeavours for its ſalvation.

The other image which holds up to our view ſome of theſe ſpectacles which compoſe ſublunary pleaſures, is, "the luſt of the eye." Here the deſtroyers of vice and the promoters of virtue are exhibited in various forms, an din this variegated and flattering ſcene are the men of this world highly delighted. On theſe they gaze with a ſteady eye. What objects may be, and are here ſuppoſed, the attentive and reflecting mind will eaſily diſcover. They are ſuch as plays, exhibitions, mere ſenſual ſpectacles and ſhows, and innumerable other ſinful ſcenes, which allure the attention and gratify the eye. And if we even turn our attention from public to private objects, the ſame proſpects are preſented to our view. For inſtance, perſons who are ever preſſing forward to attain the riches of this world. To them the ſhining appearances of ſilver and gold are the moſt pleaſing: to them, money is an idol. Theſe are the objects after which our eyes luſt, and upon which a part of earthly happineſs is founded.

Let us laſtly exhibit to our imaginations the remaining part of the ſcene of human pleaſures, which the Apoſtle deſcribes by

"the pride of life." What reſpects pride it is this, exhibiting to the world ſuch ſuperficial and pompous appearances which exceed the bounds of decency, and what our own condition in life will not permit. Men frequently ſacrifice their health and eternal ſalvation merely to ſhew to the gazing multitude, their pride and opulence. What are thoſe magnificent edifices which every where ſtand in our view? What are thoſe ſplendid and coſtly gardens which adorn the fields of men? but objects and ſcenes, which indicate human pride. What is this oſtentatious luxury of dreſs, and other appendages but the pride of life.

It even comprehends more than theſe. Men are ever anxious to exhibit to the world their pompous appearances by honors and dignities, by high titles and promoted ſtations in life. They continually aſpire after the pride and vanity of this fleeting world, but the virtue and honors, which entitle them to the enjoyment of future felicity, are far below their notice and conſideration. We may truly in the words of our text declare, whatever is in the world, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eyes, and the pride of life, are the higher objects of men. But however rational and juſtifiable ſuch a conduct may appear in the minds of men, and

whatever ſanction it may have received, and ſtill receive from the prevailing cuſtom of the world, let us reſt aſſured, that they are highly diſpleaſing and abominable in the ſight of God, and accordingly deſtroy our preſent as well as our future felicity. This leads us

II. To ſhew how unjuſtifiable and ſinful the love of the world is.

The propriety of fulfilling this diſuaſion of the Apoſtle will evidently appear from the following important and perſuaſive reaſons. The firſt which offers itſelf in this conſideration is, the inconſiſtency of theſe deſires, or incompatibility of the love of the world, with the love of God. To place our affections upon two objects, which in their nature and tendency are oppoſite; and at the ſame time to poſſeſs a ſupreme regard for both, is a ſuppoſition abſurd to allow, and a thing altogether impoſſible to perform. The truth of this aſſertion every rational mind muſt diſcover. It is not only ſupported by reaſon, but even ſanctioned in the words of our text; for we are here aſſured, that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Now to love the world, my beloved, is, as has been obſerved, placing our affection upon it, and ſerving it in all our ſecular intereſts and deſigns.

of heaven aſpire after the love of God, and eternal ſalvation. They find the objects and pleaſures of this life ſo impure and tranſient as cauſe them to ſeek after thoſe, which are holy and permanent.

The love of the world will appear infinitely more unjuſtifiable, and ſinful, if we trace it to its ſource, or conſider its origin. If we examine in every reſpect the nature and tendency of human pleaſures, we may without the leaſt prejudice againſt the things themſelves, or violation of the truth declare, that earthly pleaſures and enjoyments have not their origin from God. Although the earth and its foundations where brought into being by the Almighty, and deſigned for the uſe and gratification of his creatures, yet the Apoſtle poſitively declares, that its ſinful pleaſures are to be rejected, becauſe they are not of the Father. This is evident from the ſubſequent conſiderations. God is not the inſtigator or author of ſuch frivolous earthly pleaſures, which have now been conſidered. He cannot be, for he inceſſantly calls us from them. The world we know is very influential in inſtigating and inflaming our affections to its evil practices, but we are affectionately exhorted in the epiſtle to the Coloſſians to " Set our affections on things above, not on things on the

earth." The world physically considered is good, and must attract our admiration, for it is the work of God, and as it were a mirror, in which all his perfections shine. But if we consider it in relation to us in this present sinful state, and its tendency to draw our affections from God, we shall find that God is not the author of these worldly pleasures.

The origin of worldly pleasures is not, and cannot be ascribed to the Almighty, for they are averse to his will, and consequently must be unpleasing to him. The pleasures of this life are destroyers of virtue, and promoters of vice. They are of such a nature and tendency, as to lead men into sin and evil of every kind, even to cause both their souls and bodies to receive endless misery. Such surely cannot proceed from him who is the Father of lights. Neither can God condescend to such scenes of worldly pleasures, and receive delight from the performance of them. And this may very easily be determined, by having recourse to daily transactions in life. Are men delighted with events, which destroy or in any respect oppose their plans, or secular interests? Of this daily experience convinces to the contrary. In like manner,

my beloved, we may discover that our heavenly Father is not delighted with worldly pleasures, for they stand in opposition to the gracious plans he has laid for the furtherance of our salvation.

We may then very justly conclude, that the love of the world is not of the Father, but flows from an opposite source. The chief concern of the generality of men is, how they may enjoy the pleasures which the ensnaring world insinuates. And they are of the world, because men frequently sacrifice every part of religious duty in order to promote them, and consequently view them as the only circumstances worthy their notice.

The third reason offered to shew the impropriety of placing our affections upon this world, and its immoderate enjoyments, is taken from the connection of such desires with the world itself. For "the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof." These words should fill our minds with fear and astonishment, for we are therein assured of the vanishing condition of nature, and particularly of the final dissolution of the world. Numberless circumstances, or effects in the universe, by natural phenomenas might here be produced to illustrate the transient scene of this world. But let us at present, have

recourſe to the pure fountain of holy writ, from which this truth is derived, and in which it is alſo eſtabliſhed. The Apoſtle Peter expreſſly declares, that "the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth alſo, and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up." The viſible heavens unable to ſuſtain the coming of the Lord in his glory, ſhall paſs away, ſuffering ſuch an awful change, and be attended with ſuch rapidity and clamour, as will far exceed the heat of our imaginations. Even "the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat." The elements of which the earth and its creatures are compoſed, ſhall by the aſtoniſhing power of fire be diſſolved, and ſuch will be the effects of this operation, that the globe and its inhabitants, and all the works, whether of nature or art, ſhall be utterly conſumed. Where then will thoſe ſtately palaces and pluming gardens be? Lo! they will be hurled and deſtroyed in this general conflagration. The whole beautiful fabric will be thrown down, never more to ariſe. The change and ruin of this material ſyſtem is alſo verified by St. Paul in his epiſtle to the Hebrews, ſaying, "They ſhall periſh, they all ſhall wax old as doth a garment, and as a veſture ſhalt

thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed." It is farther confirmed by the words of Chriſt himſelf, when he directed his diſciples to obſerve the ſigns of the time which were to be preludes of the deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation, declaring, "Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but my words ſhall not paſs away." Certain it is then, my beloved, that the preſent habitation of men ſhall be made to paſs away, when their probationary courſe is finiſhed, and the time moſt proper for its termination is arrived.

The world not only paſſeth away, but alſo "the luſts thereof." In conſequence of their connection with the world, they muſt undergo the ſame fate. They are ſo related to each other, as an effect is to its cauſe, which if the one is deſtroyed, the other will aſſuredly not be accompliſhed. When the foundations of the world are ſhaken, and when the whole frame of nature falls into ruin, then will thoſe proud and ſtately cities, thoſe pyramids and towers, thoſe temples and palaces which cover the ſurface of the earth, no longer remain and exhibit thoſe ſcenes which now delight the eyes of a ſinful generation. "The faſhion of this world," ſays St. Paul to the Corinthians, "paſſeth away." Even deſire ſhall fail, is the language of Solomon. Let us

then, not place our happineſs in the enjoyment of the things of this life. Let us uſe this world as not abuſing it, and amidſt the buſtle of the world keep our minds diſaffected to its pleaſures, ever animated with the love of God.

The fourth, and laſt forcible argument given to eradicate from our breaſts thoſe appetites, which impede and deſtroy our love of God, is taken from the happy effects of the contrary duty, or the immortality of him who loves God. The Apoſtle in the words of our text affirms "He that doeth the will of God, abideth forever." This is the character of the true lover of God in oppoſition to the lover of the world. His delight is to do the will of God. The ſupreme ruler has laid before mankind certain preſcriptions, in the knowledge and performance of which we muſt ever be exerciſed. The will of God comprehends faith in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, which is clear from John 6, 29--40. Faith is a firm perſuaſion that he is that eternal Son of God. whom he declared himſelf to be, and that he is the true Saviour and Lord of the world. As he is our Lord, Faith alſo includes our obligations and conſent to obey all his commandments, and to put our whole truſt in him alone for the attainment of life eternal.

By having faith in the only begotten Son of God, and submitting unto the precepts and doctrines, which have been delivered unto us, we are under an obligation to regulate the tenor of our conduct accordingly. For the will of the Almighty is likewise that we shall be holy, or have our inclinations conformable to the holy nature of God, keeping ourselves seperate from the polluted customs, and fashions of a degenerate world, and at the same time keep ourselves in readiness, ever exhibiting our services to the demands of our divine benefactor, and yielding all obedience unto him. For says St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, "God make you perfect in every good work, doing that which is well pleasing in his sight." This is the object a true lover of God pursues, and the only thing he has in view. The perfection of integrity to God, of a clear conscience to men, of vivid affections and desires within ourselves are the fountains of the good works alluded to. By being perfect in such parts of our duty here, we shall assuredly be fit for the enjoyment of heaven hereafter. The will of the Supreme Being is, that we shall disclaim all conformity to the world and its concomitants. Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your

mind, ſays St. Paul, "that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." The good will of God expreſſes his counſel of grace. It is good, for it diſcovers his good intentions towards us. His acceptable will is, that we ſhould be ſtimulated to the performance of ſuch good works, which we may even ſuppoſe are pleaſing in his ſight. His perfect will is, that we ſhould obey his commandments, and practice all things, which tend to the perfection of the man of God, and furniſh us thoroughly in every good word and work. This will of God, which contains theſe three diſtinct objects, we chriſtians muſt prove by applying our hearts and ears to the word of God, and ſo we ſhall be transformed in our minds, and actually perform every known duty.

Such is the revealed will of God to man. The bleſſed effects ariſing from the performance is, that he "abideth forever." Superior to the works of nature, and unmoved by its changes will the true lover of God ever remain. Amidſt the general and final ruin the upright and faithful ſubjects of God will have nothing to fear. They will continue ever unimpaired, and crowned with immortality. To the preſent exiſtence our ſtability is not confined, for here all is

ſubject to change and will aſſuredly terminate in univerſal deſtruction. But to the new heavens and the new earth we are to direct our view, in which he that doeth the will of God, ſhall be made to dwell with him in everlaſting righteouſneſs. Permanent felicity will be the reward of his integrity and godlineſs. Surely he ſhall be for ever, ſays the Pſalmiſt, the righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance.

Thus I have ſhewn you my friends, the impropriety and unjuſtifiableneſs of uſing the world, and its enjoyments immoderately. Sufficient has been ſaid to convince every reflecting perſon among us of its evil conſequences, and to ſtimulate us to the faithful diſcharge of our love and integrity to God. Notwithſtanding all the forcible arguments revealed by the Almighty, and all rational endeavours of pious men, for the abolition of ſuch conduct, yet how little do they affect the minds of men. This daily experience teſtifies. To us who view the conduct of the world, what vile and diſguſting ſcenes are every where repreſented to our obſervation. On the one hand, rioting and intoxication, on the other wantonneſs and debauchery. One haſtening to ſcenes of pleaſure and amuſement; another, ſitting in the ſeats of the ſcornful and un-

godly. On every ſide are the ways of Satan, to them more deſirable and pleaſing than the ways of God.

The houſe of feaſting therefore ſhould be more the object of our fear than the houſe of mourning. Oh! to what degeneracy and corruption is man fallen? But my beloved what fruits may we expect to derive from ſuch ſcenes of abomination! Nothing but remorſe of conſcience in the preſent life, and endleſs miſery in the life to come. We ſhall be deſpiſed and rejected by the Lord of heaven and earth, and ever deprived of his brightneſs and glory. O be then perſuaded of the vanity and ruin attending human pleaſures, and begin from this time forward to enquire after God, our only joy.

And thoſe of us, who have experienced the love of God, let us never leave him, but continually preſs forward therein, ever growing in grace and favor with our Lord. Let us who know and do his will, remain ſtedfaſt in the diſcharge of it unto the end of our life. Like Job let us be reſolved not to remove our integrity from God.

But how ſhall I addreſs you, who are mourning and complaining of your inability to do the will of your heavenly Father. O my affectionate friends, there is no more

required than an emotion of the soul. Desire is the only thing which must first appear, and then you may rest assured, that you will receive aid in proportion to the improvement. They who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled, and joyfully entertained with the embraces of mercy. Grant therefore, O Lord, that thy Spirit may be our only guide to bring us to the everlasting enjoyment of thy love, amen.

SERMON VI.

On Luke ii. 41---52.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. &c.

LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house," said the Psalmist David, "and the place where thine honor dwelleth." Love to the house of God is one of the most amiable qualities, which distinguishes a christian. It is a quality which all may wish to be thought possessed of, but few have those

criterions whereby others may judge that they really merit it. The marks which are requiſite to manifeſt our love to the place of divine worſhip, are an emotion of the ſoul, which expreſſes our deſire for ſeeing it, and an endeavour to appear as frequent as poſſible therein, to enter into a covenant with God. Unleſs men ſhew this affection under the two concurring actions of deſire and frequent preſence, vain are all their pretenſions to true chriſtianity. For if we have a deſire only, without proceeding further in our duty, it will profit us little, and if we are continually in the houſe of God, having not that fervent deſire and piety in our hearts, which ſuch a place juſtly demands, it is a fruitleſs performance. The one is as it were, faith without works, the other, works without faith. Both ſeperately taken are inſignificant. We muſt therefore unite them, if we wiſh to ſhew the character of a real chriſtian.

But what is the object which a true chriſtian loves? It is with David, the houſe of God; It is that beautiful and divine ſtructure, which is conſecrated for the ſervice and honor of the Lord our God. This place of reſidence is a delightful object placed before the eyes of the lover of the Almighty. A place, to which all his affec-

tions are directed, into which to go and dwell there is the higheſt delight.

And what cauſes this delight to ariſe in the ſoul? What prompts us to go to the houſe of God; It is, becauſe the honor of God dwells there? It is the place where the great Ruler of the univerſe is pleaſed to manifeſt his preſence among his faithful and obedient people. In the tabernacle of the Lord we are particularly entering into communion with him. There, our devotion riſes upon the wings of faith and praiſes, and it is there that we are addreſſed by the word of God, and acted upon by the Holy Spirit. Such are the evidences required to ſhew this divine love to the houſe of God, and ſuch are the motives which compel us to dwell there. But he who ſincerely places his affections upon his Creator, and truſts in him as a guardian and ſhepherd, not only directs his eye and pays reſpect to the houſe of worſhip, but alſo honours and glorifies God, by delighting in and keeping his ordinances. Of this part of a chriſtian's duty contained in the goſpel for this day, I ſhall at preſent diſcourſe. To this end, then, we are to conſider,

I. The origin of this delight in the ordinances of God.

II. Shew how our delight therein is manifeſted.

From enquiry it is found, that our delight in the ordinances of the Lord is excited, or ariſes from a knowledge we have of their excellency. It is certain, that knowledge is no leſs eſſential in propagating and eſtabliſhing divine, than human appointments. It is from a thorough acquaintance with things that we may diſcover their true eſtimation. Our eſtimation, therefore, of all ordinances both human and divine ſhould be derived from a conſideration of two important circumſtances. The firſt is their intention. What was the object of God in laying theſe ordinances before men, or for what end were they inſtituted? Under the divine ordinances we underſtand public worſhip, public inſtruction, and public teſtimonies of our ſerious diſpoſition to our Maker. Public worſhip has two ends in view, the firſt of which is to remind us of our dependence upon God, which creates humility and confidence in him. The other is, our uniting together, and ſhewing an equality of ſentiment. In this our God delights, becauſe ſuch a union may become the means of exciting others to a true devotion, whoſe breaſts were not yet warmed thereby. The

whole tenor of the divine œconomy with men ſhews, that it is the will of the Deity, that one man ſhall endeavour to effect the ſalvation of the other.

This being the intention of the ordinances of God, let us alſo know the efficacy, or power, with which they are inveſted. This is the greateſt evidence we can have of the excellency of the divine inſtitutions. They profeſs a power ſuperior to, and more momentous, than all the laws and eſtabliſhments which have been, and can be given by mankind. Human laws are highly inferior to religious obſervances; they can extend no farther than to the actions of men, but religion, which contains the ordinances of God, rules not only the actions, but alſo the tempers and inclinations. The power of which I ſpeak is, continually to draw our will and affections from this world, and place them on God. He who truly delights in the ordinances of God, cannot but deſpiſe and diſregard all earthly objects, which hinder heavenly joy and peace to rule within him: ſuch is the excellency of theſe ordinances diſcoverable from their intention to teach and their power to govern our lives.

It is obſervable alſo, that this delight does not only ariſe from the knowledge of their excellency, but which is more, the

reverence we have for God, who is the author of them. And why muſt we obey the Almighty? the reaſon is evident; becauſe every good thing proceeds from him. There is nothing in the nature of God, which is evil: he is therefore to be acknowledged as the cauſe and ſpring of every thing which is good. This the Apoſtle James plainly informs us of in the 1ſt chap. and 17th verſe of his epiſtle ſaying, "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights." Every thing which is good, either of the viſible or inviſible things of the creation, we receive from God. We muſt acknowledge him as the author of all the powers and perfections that are in us, and the giver of the bleſſings we enjoy, obtained through theſe means. None of our blemiſhes or evil actions are to be charged upon God but upon ourſelves, for in us, all ſin originates. God is alſo ſaid to be the "Father of Lights." He is the cauſe of the viſible light of the ſun, and heavenly bodies. It is him, who ſaid, let there be light, and immediately light appeared. This God is pronounced the author of the firſt of all the works of the creation, and in ſome reſpects compared to it. In this compariſon is the goodneſs and perfection

of the Almighty clearly diſcovered, for as the ſun is full of heat, power and beauty, ſo God is complete in grace, providence and glory. and infinitely more.

If every good thing ariſes from him, then we accordingly muſt love all which proceeds from him. This is upon the principle of love to the author. If we love God, we will delight in his ordinances, and who is there among us, who ſhould not feel it his duty to love God? Who ſhould be unwilling to fulfil what God requires, ſince it is ſo beneficial both to our preſent comfort and future welfare? There is nothing which he does, but it is for the good of all his creatures. Rich and poor, the wiſe and ignorant, the juſt and unjuſt, all partake without diſtinction of the mercy and goodneſs of the Almighty, for with him, there is no reſpect of perſons. You and I, my brethren, if we do the will of the Lord, ſhall abide for ever.

To reverence the Almighty, is to obey, for this is the firſt reſult of love towards him, There is no love, if there is no obedience. For this is the love of God, ſays St. John, "that we keep his commandments." We truly love GOD in fulfilling his commandments, for in keeping them, we muſt have an inclination thereto and a delight therein.

We muſt be reſolved to obey, and keep GOD's laws, crying out with the pſalmiſt David, "O how love I thy law, I will run the way of thy commandments." Even Chriſt in the evangeliſt John, when the Apoſtles were ſhewing their love to him, by filling their hearts with ſorrow for his departure, tells them, that love towards him did not conſiſt in grieving for him, but in keeping his commandments, "If ye love me ſays Chriſt, keep my commandments." Thus our reverence for GOD cauſes us to delight in his ordinances.

And if we proceed farther in this enquiry we ſhall find, that we are ſenſibly delighted with the divine injunctions from the good effect they produce upon others. The true children of God derive from the obſervance of them the greateſt pleaſure and comfort. They conceive it the greateſt bleſſing in enjoying the means and opportunity of keeping the ordinances which have been inſtituted by their Heavenly Father. There is no conſideration more edifying to the ſoul, more powerful in regulating man's whole conduct, both public and private, than the ordinances of God; it is the meat and drink of a true Chriſtian; it is his ſupport. Obſerve thoſe who have a due reſpect to and perform as much as lay in their power the

commandments of God, and you will see, that all their words and actions proceed from a divine light dwelling in their hearts, from a mind truly attached to God and his ordinances.

The good effect is not only observable in the comfort which they possess, but also in their holiness. They have such impressions upon their minds of the divine nature, as cause them to keep themselves from the vices and extravagances which surround them: with true piety and uprightness they conduct themselves, ever living in the strictest communion with their Maker; and let it be remembered, that such Christians, even in addition to their comfort and holiness, are filled with the love of universal peace. Instead of forming dissentions and quarrels, they endeavour to quell them; in the room of war and confusion, they wish to substitute peace and order; instead of filling their minds with all worldly or political disputes, they reject them, and attend to what is more profitable both to their present and future happiness. In a word, comfort under all trials and temptations, holiness in a depraved world, and brotherly love, peace and harmony they receive from delighting in God's ordinances.---Lastly,

This delight is known to arise from our

own experience. Thoſe whoſe chief pleaſure conſiſts in keeping them, enjoy the moſt comfortable ſenſations in the Houſe of God. Theſe ſenſations are cauſed from the various parts of divine ſervice, all of which concur to raiſe our affections to a more happy and permanent place of exiſtence, and give us a pledge of our future glorious ſtate. The bleſſed thoughts which fill our minds in ſinging the hymns and pſalms which are appointed, is almoſt beyond human conception; every word, line and verſe offered in melodious ſtrains to God comforts us, and brings us nearer to a ſpiritual fellowſhip with him. And ſuch is alſo the effect of prayer; there we open our hearts to the Almighty, laying open to his view all our weakneſſes and diſtreſſes, and receive from him the moſt effectual remedy for their removal. What are the comforts, my brethren, which we derive from prayer? It is in the performance of this duty that we ſpeak to God, and God to us, thereby filling our hearts with divine love. This love is alſo promoted by paying attention to the ſermons preached, and applying the words which are ſpoken to ourſelves individually; and above all is this love confirmed by partaking of the ſacraments of the Lord's Supper.

From our own experience ariſes likewiſe the higheſt delight. What pleaſure does he who has taſted of God's ordinances enjoy? O my beloved friends, far above what language can expreſs! All his words and actions are expreſſive of a peaceful mind; his whole life is regulated accordingly, and is clearly diſcovered by others. We come now to the ſecond part of this conſideration, which is,

II. To ſhew how our delight in the ordinances of God is manifeſted. The firſt circumſtance which here ſtrikes our attention, is the true motive to this delight. The true motive is not mere cuſtom. It is not becauſe men have been for many ages accuſtomed to go to the houſe of God, and attended to its diſcipline, that ſhould induce us to delight in the ordinances of the Lord. Acting thus we act from a principle of prejudice; we ſhew that we have no true ideas of them, and conſequently cannot judge of their excellency. This we know is too much the caſe among men, even men who are diſtinguiſhed for their wiſdom and underſtanding, men whom the world calls Chriſtians. Cuſtom, therefore, cannot be the true motive, neither is the imitation of it the example of others. Are we in this grand concern to be regulated by the practice of others?

no means, for we might by them be as eaſily led into error and falſehood as into the contrary; this would deſtroy our ability to ſearch the ſcriptures, and our free will to think and act for ourſelves; the true motive could not be, and is not the conſideration of obtaining merit. We know, my beloved, that we are ſinners, and ſubject to fall daily into more ſin. We cannot exceed the bounds of our duty to the Almighty, and, therefore, are defective in what is required of us; this Chriſt in the Evangeliſt Luke tells us, by ſaying, "When ye have done all thoſe things which are commanded you, ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants, we have done that which was our duty to do." We may perhaps do more than others, yet no more than was demanded of us. Though we ſhould do all, yet in many reſpects we come ſhort of doing it right, we conſequently cannot merit any thing at the hand of the Lord. We muſt neither delight in the Lord's ordinances with an intention to acquire the favor of others; this is ſerving the Almighty for our own honor, not for his honor, and frequently exhibiting to the world ſuch appearances, as do not coincide with the dictates of conſcience. All theſe are not the true motives, why we ſhould rejoice in and do the commands of the Lord.

But that which compels us to it, is our

affinity with God. We muſt know that our relation to God is ſuch as that of a ſon to a father. This Jeſus tells his parents when they queſtioned him concerning his conduct, "How is it that ye ſought me, wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Father's buſineſs?" Here ye ſee, that he offers a reaſon why he was detained. The buſineſs which my Father gave me to perform, would not permit me to retire from the temple: obſerve, it was his Father's buſineſs. By this title of Father, it is plain, my hearers, was not meant Joſeph, for Joſeph had left nothing for him to do. He poſſeſſed no office in the temple which could afford any employ. He even was returning to Nazareth, and ſuppoſed his ſon Jeſus, to be in their company. All of which ſhew that it was not Joſeph, his pretended father, but God. This buſineſs they might have imagined was that of his heavenly Father, for Jeſus had devoted himſelf early to religion, and accordingly it was his deſire and pleaſure to do his Father's will and accompliſh his work. They who know to whom they are related are ready to acknowledge their relations; and thoſe who are intimately connected in ſpiritual concerns, are of one mind and inclination, at leaſt ſuch they ſhould be. Therefore Chriſt reproved his two diſciples James and John for their

rage to thoſe who oppoſed Chriſt's miniſtry. They requeſted him to give them power to call fire from heaven to conſume a village of Samaria; but Chriſt turned, and rebuked them, ſaying, "ye know not what manner of ſpirit ye are of." If they had breathed the ſpirit of Chriſt and Chriſtianity, they would not have made ſuch an inhuman requeſt. The Chriſtian ſyſtem teaches us to love our enemies, to bleſs them that curſe, and as an eminent divine obſerves, rather to call grace than fire from heaven. Theſe diſciples, we find, were unacquainted with the ſpirit which ſhould guide them, but Chriſt in our text knew it, and therefore ſhewed his relation to God.

The true motive which ſhould induce us to delight in God's ordinances, is alſo the great importance of ſuch ordinances. This is diſcoverable in the ſeveral parts of them. There is public worſhip in general, and in particular the ſacraments, that of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, ſermons, hymns, and ſeveral other circumſtances relating thereto, all, if duly reflected upon, will make us ſenſible of their eſtimate, as tending to fill our minds with tender and pleaſing emotions of God and future felicity. This is the true motive which indicates that we delight in God's appointments.

We demonſtrate this our delight by punctuality. To be punctual requires us to exert both our mental and corporeal faculties, in order to exhibit it in its true light. It is ſuch, that we muſt ſhew it by early attachment In this our Saviour and his parents give a ſtriking example. The text tells us, that his parents went to Jeruſalem every year at the feaſt of the paſſover. And when he, namely, Chriſt, was twelve years old, he went up with them, after the cuſtom of the feaſt. The laws of Moſes commanded that three feaſts ſhould be kept in a year, that of the paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles, and that all the males were to appear there at theſe ſtated times, Exod. xxiii. 14, 17. Deut. xvi. 16. To theſe, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, Joſeph conſtantly attended, though it is not here mentioned. This feaſt of the paſſover, however, they kept, ſhewing their willingneſs to perform their duty, by frequenting the public ordinances. But what here particularly draws our attention, is, the early attachment which Chriſt, our Lord, ſhewed to them, for he was but twelve years of age when he went with his parents, for he was a child of more wiſdom and underſtanding than ordinarily appears in the world, and particularly of his age. This ſhews, my brethren, what the conduct or

duty of parents is. They muſt be punctual in attending to public ordinances, thereby ſhewing their children a good example, which will ſtimulate them to follow, and enjoy the ſame privileges. This gives them to underſtand that as ſoon as children can hear with underſtanding, they ſhould bring them to the houſe of God, and dedicate them to his ſervice. And when they are grown up, to come to the goſpel paſſover, the Lord's ſupper, thereby coming themſelves into a nearer communion with the Lord. Let this example of Jeſus be a mean, my young hearers of bringing you into the houſe of God, and attending to his ordinances.

But when we come to the houſe of God, we muſt not only make an early beginning, but we muſt be attentive to what is ſpoken, and through the whole of the ſervice be ſincere and devout. It is by attention and devotion that we ſhew our punctuality in performing God's ordinances. What does it profit us, beloved, if we frequent the houſe of God with a mind filled with worldly affairs? And how ſhameful is it when we are under the ſound of the goſpel to ſhew a neglect and light carriage. The houſe of God is dedicated and ſet apart for public worſhip and ſervice, and conſequently we

ought to reverence it, by employing our whole time therein to religion, by offering up our prayers in it with fervor, by not merely hearing God's word, but alſo reſolving to obey it, by celebrating the ſacred myſteries with humility and devotion. This will deſtroy many evil impreſſions in our hearts, and correct many indecencies in our conduct. It will cauſe us to ſerve God in ſpirit and in truth, and in all the ways of his appointed worſhip.

If we are punctual in the ordinances of God we muſt ſhew it, by ſearching for the foundation of ſuch ordinances. We muſt inquire into the original cauſe, and into the circumſtances which are influential to continue them. We muſt diſcover the end for which they were inſtituted. A knowledge of theſe will aid us through all the oppoſition which we meet with, and teach us in what manner to regulate our hopes in the enjoyment of happineſs hereafter. Our punctuality is farther known by inſtilling into the minds of our children a religious education. Without inſtructing the young in the principles of religion, ſuch as the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, the ſacraments of baptiſm and Lord's ſupper--- without cauſing them frequently to read the holy ſcriptures, and at the ſame time im-

preſſing it upon their minds, in daily converſation, it is impoſſible that they could know their duty, and have a deſire and delight in performing it. This however, Chriſt's parents did, for they went with him to Jeruſalem, moſt certainly to inſtruct him in, and make him acquainted with the Jewiſh rites. It is afterwards ſaid, that he was found in the temple, in the midſt of the doctors, hearing them and aſking them queſtions, from which it plainly appears that he muſt have received this knowledge before, in order to have been qualified for this important ſtation. And this religious knowledge he muſt have acquired from his parents and the influence of the Holy Ghoſt upon him. Let this example then, parents, lead you to give your children a religious education, for this alone will afford you the greateſt pleaſure, this alone will, if improved by them, lead them to the performance of God's bleſſed will. Again,

We are not only to ſhew our delight in God's ordinances by being punctual, but alſo by perſeverance. It is not ſufficient for us to go to the houſe of God, once, twice, or perhaps a few times more; but we muſt continue in the execution of them. We muſt follow the example of Joſeph and Mary. What was this eminent example?

It was this: they not only went to Jerusalem yearly, upon these appointed times, but also "did not return till they had fulfilled the days." The days appointed in the law of Moses were seven. Thus the whole of these days they remained, though it is supposed, that it was not absolutely necessary that they should remain more than the two first days, after which many returned home. That we must pursue, and shew our delight therein, we may see clearly in the example of the child Jesus. He, instead of returning with his parents, tarried behind in Jerusalem, thereby not shewing his disobedience to his parents, or unwillingness to return with them, but an inclination and desire to begin and finish the work, which he knew his heavenly Father had reserved for him. From this example of Joseph and Mary let parents learn the duty of fulfilling the ordinances of God. From this example of Jesus, let young persons and children learn to be willing and anxious to dwell in the house of the Lord. There is nothing more delightful, there is nothing more beneficial. Lastly,

If we delight in the ordinances of God, we will evidence it in our life and conversation, for it is productive of much fruitfulness: this we plainly see from the conduct

of Mary, particularly in her meditations. She did not underſtand the anſwer which Jeſus returned to her, when ſhe reproved him for his remaining behind. She alſo ſuppoſed that he was the promiſed Meſſiah, and that he would reign upon the throne of his father David. This notion would conſequently lead her to think, that he ſhould rather be in the royal palace, than in the temple. She did not conceive that he was acting the office of a prophet. But ſhe nevertheleſs kept all theſe ſayings of Jeſus, in her heart. Upon theſe ſhe meditated, thinking that they would be more clearly explained and underſtood hereafter. This gives us to know, my brethren, that although we may frequently not underſtand, and doubt the expreſſions of mankind, yet we are not to diſregard the words of Jeſus Chriſt. Whatever we find difficult to comprehend we ſhould leave to another period, in which we may become more fully acquainted and eſtabliſhed. Of this we have an example from the diſciples of Jeſus. For Jeſus in a ſimilar expreſſion tells them of his death, ſaying "Deſtroy this temple and in three days I will raiſe it up. This expreſſion, after his death and reſurrection they remembred, and were ſenſible of its truth, and therefore embraced the holy ſcriptures with great-

er confidence. Let us then not do as many in the preſent day, who reject whatever appears in the ſcriptures contradictory to their narrow underſtanding. But let us follow Mary, keeping all the divine expreſſions in our minds, which we cannot thoroughly diſcover, and truſt in God for the nearer manifeſtation of them.

Its fruitfulneſs alſo appears in the life of Jeſus Chriſt. He, we are told, was ſubject to his parents. Although he withdrew from them, it was to ſhew that he was guided more by a divine than human nature, and to attend to his heavenly father's buſineſs. Yet he was ſubject to them, he attended to their commands in every reſpect, and in all probability aſſiſted his father in his occupation. This is an example to children how to conduct themſelves towards their parents. This ſhews how dutiful and obedient they ſhould be in all things, which their parents or guardians demand of them. He, who was filled with ſuch wiſdom and underſtanding, as cauſed all who heard him to be aſtoniſhed;---he, who was the ſon of God, and ſent to do his father's will, ſhews the example of obedience to parents, for he was ſubject to them. Chriſt not only ſhewed obedience, but alſo increaſed in wiſdom and ſtature, before God. As he

grew in age, he grew in wiſdom, and in all the endowments of which the human ſoul is capable. As the faculties of the ſoul grew more and more apt, ſo the gifts it received from his divine nature were more and more extenſive and communicated. And from this improvement, he was in favour with God and man, that is, in all the graces both human and divine, which rendered him acceptable both to God and man. Thus you obſerve, my beloved friends, the ſolution of the words of our text. I ſhall now conclude by making ſome uſeful reflections upon the ſubject, and hope you may apply them to yourſelves individually.

We ſee from the words of our text, how punctual the ordinances of God were obſerved among the Jews, and particularly by Jeſus Chriſt and his parents. But how different is the appearance among Chriſtians. We, who have every where churches erected, and conſecrated for the ſervice of God; we who have his meſſengers regularly eſtabliſhed therein, and proclaiming the good tidings of the goſpel unto all men, we ſhamefully neglect the worſhip and ordinances of God. Few there are who conſider their importance, and very few who take delight in keeping them. Men in the preſent day will rather go to the houſe of feaſting than

to the houſe of mourning; rather go to a tavern, and ſpend all their ſubſtance there, and other places of abomination, than enter the houſe of God, and offer one penny either for the ſupport of God's ſervants, or maintenance of the poor. Even thoſe who think themſelves good chriſtians, conſider it ſufficient to worſhip God, three, or perhaps four times a year; but let them recollect that every Lord's Day is appointed to be kept holy. Others there are who proceed further, and go to the houſe of God one part of the ſabbath and ſpend the other in reſting, debauchery, intoxication, and taking the pleaſure of the world. In ſhort, we may turn our eyes every where, and nothing but a ſhameful neglect of God's ordinances---nothing but infidelity appears in all the ways and actions of chriſtians. But you who are guilty of profaning the days of public worſhip, or at any other time live in this unchriſtian-like manner, remember that there is a God who beholds and knows all your thoughts, words and actions,---remember there is a day of death, in which you will ſee the ſhame you have brought upon yourſelves; and above all, remember there is a day of judgment, a day in which your whole life on earth will be examined by the Lord of heaven and earth. Oh! let theſe reflec-

tions once enter your mind and be carefully attended to. Let them once bring you to know and to do your duty to God, your neighbour and yourſelves.

But notwithſtanding the ordinances of God are ſo ſhamefully neglected and deſpiſed, yet there is cauſe to rejoice, for they give us, who delight in them, great comfort. Although they have ever been, and are at preſent undermined by infidels and deiſts, yet are we bleſſed and comforted with the continuance and preſervation of them. And by receiving this comfort in the houſe of God, we feel and know that we have his preſence there, and are well aſſured that we ſhall enter into the regions above, and enjoy immortal glory and happineſs.

In conſequence of enjoying comfort in this life, and poſſeſſing ſuch confidence in the life to come, we are all well aſſured, that there is no perſon beyond the neceſſity of theſe ordinances. This is a ſhameful and deſtructive error into which ſome men fall, particularly in the preſent age. It is vain to ſuppoſe, that when men have come to years of diſcretion, and made themſelves acquainted with religion, and the duties it enjoins, that they ſtand in no need of further inſtruction from God's ſervants, and can of themſelves proſecute what is further required

for their ſalvation. Such men bear the peculiar title of Seperatiſts, becauſe they ſeparate from the communion of chriſtians in worſhiping God, and diſdain to receive further inſtruction from his miniſters in points of religious duties.

Againſt ſuch a line of conduct, my beloved brethren, let us ever guard, for be aſſured, that by thus paſſing your life here, you will aſſuredly forfeit the crown of glory, which is reſerved for you in heaven. O let me then intreat you, parents and guardians, to be ever mindful of and diligent in following the example ſhewn by the parents of our Saviour. Then it will appear, that your delight is in keeping the law of the Lord, and then only will you ſhew that you meditate therein day and night. No leſs becoming is it for, and equally obligatory upon you, children and young of every age, to attend to this momentous and heavenly precedent of the bleſſed child Jeſus. Let not the toys and pleaſures of this world deceive you, and engage your attention, but be perſuaded of the laſting pleaſure and advantage reſulting from ſincerely worſhiping your Creator in the days of your youth. If you like him, follow your parents to the houſe of God, in imitation of him, take delight in continuing there; then, as you increaſe in age, you

will receive an augmentation of wiſdom and grace, continually proceeding from one degree of perfection to another, and at length be received into heaven, and there be rewarded with endleſs peace and felicity. And may the Lord God Almighty ſtrengthen our faith, and revive in us a heavenly deſire to follow the examples laid before us, that thereby we may be received into his favor for ever. Amen.

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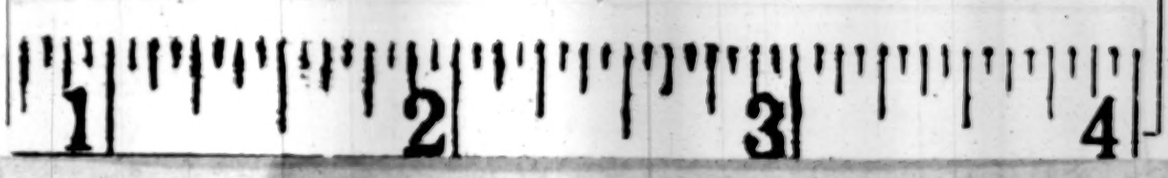
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